



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences
Department of International Relations

IDENTITY AND FOREIGN POLICY: THE U.S. PERCEPTION OF CHINA

Bahar TEMİR

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2024

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KABUL VE ONAY

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ETİK BEYAN

Bu alıřmadaki bütn bilgi ve belgeleri akademik kurallar erevesinde elde ettiđimi, grsel, iřitsel ve yazılı tm bilgi ve sonuları bilimsel ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduđumu, kullandıđım verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapmadıđımı, yararlandıđım kaynaklara bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunduđumu, tezimin kaynak gsterilen durumlar dıřında zgn olduđunu, **Do. Dr. řebnem UDUM** danıřmanlıđında tarafımdan retildiđini ve Hacettepe niversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstits Tez Yazım Ynergesine gre yazıldıđını beyan ederim.

Bahar Temir

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved father, Mustafa Temir

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ABSTRACT

TEMİR, Bahar. *Identity and Foreign Policy: The U.S. Perception of China*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2024.

Social constructivism argues that in process of foreign policy making, as well as material factors and capabilities, ideational forces, and social structures such as identity and discourses constitute an important aspect and conceptualize material structures. Moreover, the identities of states, their subjective understandings, definitions of friends and foes are important. Therefore, based on the main research question of thesis "How has the United States constructed China as a direct threat to its hegemony after 2010 due to China's economic and political rise?", the main aim of this thesis is to find out the way in which the United States has perceived and constructed China as a direct threat due to China's rising global power in the post-2010 period. In this study, the Discourse-Historical Approach is applied to analysis of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's article issued in 2011 "America's Pacific Century" which announced the essentials of the Asia Pivot policy initiated to balance China together with the first speech of Donald Trump after the COVID-19 pandemic at the United Nations General Assembly in 2020. On that regard, the identity of China in 2011 and 2020 is analyzed with the Discourse-Historical Approach arguing that the changing balance of power affects the United States construction of China identity as threat. In this context, this thesis argues that the United States constructs Chinese identity as a direct threat in accordance with China's growing economic and political strength with using the Chinese threat construction in order to justify and legitimize its foreign policy choices.

Keywords

Identity, Social Constructivism, Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), American exceptionalism, U.S. foreign policy

ÖZET

TEMİR, Bahar. *Kimlik ve Dış Politika: Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin Çin Algısı*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2024.

Sosyal İnşacı yaklaşım, devletlerin dış politika oluşturma süreçlerinde maddi güç ve kapasiteler kadar kimlik, söylem gibi sosyal yapıların da önemli rol oynadığı ve bu sosyal yapıların maddi yapıları anlamlandırarak kavramsallaştırdığını savunur. Ayrıca, ülkelerin kimlikleri, dost-düşman gibi tanımlamaları ve kavramsallaştırmaları da oldukça önemlidir. Tezin ortaya koyduğu temel araştırma sorusu olan "Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Çin'in ekonomik ve siyasi yükselişi nedeniyle 2010'dan sonra Çin'i kendi hegemonyasına doğrudan bir tehdit olarak nasıl inşa etti?" sorusundan hareketle, bu çalışmanın temel savı 2010 sonrası dönemde Amerikan hakimiyetine meydan okuyacak kadar yükselen Çin'in artan küresel gücüne karşılık olarak Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin Çin'i tehdit olarak algılaması ve Çin kimliğini bu tehdit kavramı ile inşa etmiş olmasıdır. Bu çalışmada Çin'i dengelemek amacıyla oluşturulan Asya'ya Dönüş dış politikasının duyurulduğu Dışişleri Bakanı Hillary Clinton tarafından 2011'de yayımlanan "Amerika'nın Pasifik Yüzyılı" makalesi ve Başkan Trump tarafından COVID-19 pandemisinden hemen sonra yapılan ilk konuşma olan 2020 yılındaki Birleşmiş Milletler Genel Kurulu'ndaki konuşması incelenerek Söylem-Tarihsel Yaklaşım metodu uygulanmıştır. Bu bağlamda, Söylem-Tarihsel Yaklaşım ile 2011 ve 2020 dönemlerindeki Çin kimliği incelenmiştir ve değişen güç dengelerinin Amerika'nın Çin kimliğini inşasına ve tehdit algısına etki ettiği belirtilmiştir. Bu bağlamda tez, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin Çin kimliğini artan ekonomik ve politik gücü doğrultusunda bir tehdit olarak inşa ettiğini ve bu tehdit kimliğini dış politika tercihlerini gerekçelendirmek ve meşrulaştırmak için kullandığını savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Kimlik, İnşacılık, Söylem-Tarihsel Yaklaşım, Amerikan istisnacılığı, Amerikan Dış Politikası

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL.....	i
YAYIMLAMA VE FİKRİ MÜLKİYET HAKLARI BEYANI.....	ii
ETİK BEYAN.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT	vi
ÖZET.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
ABBREVIATIONS.....	xi
TABLES.....	xiii
FIGURES.....	xiv
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY.....	13
1.1.SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM.....	13
1.2. SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY.....	20
1.3. DISCOURSE-HISTORICAL APPROACH AS A METHOD.....	22
CHAPTER 2: AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM AND ITS IMPACT ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY.....	28
2.1.1. Religious Origins of American Exceptionalism.....	31
2.1.2. Political Origins of American Exceptionalism.....	33
2.1.3. Geopolitical Origins of American Exceptionalism.....	36
2.2.1. The Impact of American Exceptionalism on U.S. Foreign Policy.....	38
CHAPTER 3: CONSTRUCTING CHINA AS ‘OTHER’: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	49

3.1. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA AS THREAT FROM 1800 TO SECOND WORLD WAR.....	50
3.2. THE CONSTRUCTION OF 'RED CHINA' THREAT FROM 1949 TO 20TH CENTURY.....	56
3.3. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA THREAT AS A RISING POWER AND CHINESE VIRUS.....	59
3.4. THE RISE OF NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF CHINA IN THE U.S.....	64
CHAPTER 4: THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA IDENTITY AS A THREAT.....	67
4.1.THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHINA IDENTITY AS A STRATEGIC RIVAL: AN ANALYSIS OF CLINTON’S “AMERICA’S PACIFIC CENTURY”.....	69
4.1.1. Historical Background.....	70
4.1.2. Contents And Topics of The Discourse.....	73
4.1.3. Discursive Strategies.....	73
4.1.3.1. Nomination.....	74
4.1.3.2. Predication.....	77
4.1.3.3. Argumentation.....	79
4.2. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA IDENTITY AS A DIRECT THREAT: AN ANALYSIS OF DONALD TRUMP’S SPEECH AT UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.....	81
4.2.1. Historical Background.....	81
4.2.2. Contents And Topics of Discourse.....	84
4.2.3. Discursive Strategies.....	84
4.2.3.1. Nomination.....	85
4.2.3.2. Predication.....	87
4.2.3.3. Argumentation... ..	88
4.3. EVALUATION.....	92
CONCLUSION.....	98

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	103
APPENDIX1. ORİJİNALLİK RAPORU.....	109
APPENDIX2. ETİK KURUL İZİN MUAFİYETİ FORMU.....	111

ABBREVIATIONS

AIIB	Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
C.C.P.	Chinese Communist Part
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DHA	Discourse-Historical Approach
G8	Group of Eight
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
P.P.P.	Purchasing Power Parity
P.R.C.	People's Republic of China
PHEIC	Public Health Emergency of International Concern
SARS-COV-2	Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2
SIT	Social Identity Theory
U.S.	United States (of America)
U.S.S.R.	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UCR	United China Relief
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

WASP White Anglo-Saxon Protestants

WB World Bank

WHO World Health Organization

TABLES

Table 1: Discursive Strategies used in Hillary Clinton's 'America's Pacific Century'

Table 2: Discursive Strategies used in Donald Trump's Speech at United Nations General Assembly

FIGURES

Figure 1: Percentage of Global Gross Domestic Production (PPP, Intl\$), 2020 (Allison et al., 2022, p.6)

Figure 2: The mutual interaction of actors and context (Ba & Hoffmann, 2003, p.22)

Figure 3: Discursive Strategies (Wodak and Meyer 2001, p.73)

Figure 4: Yellow Terror in all his glory (Turner, 2014, p.76)

Figure 5: "Chinese Question" by Thomas Nast for Harper's Weekly. Feb. 2, 1871
("THE CHINESE QUESTION" 1871)

Figure 6: U.S. views of China increasingly negative amid coronavirus outbreak 2020

INTRODUCTION

As Graham Allison (2017) puts that Napoleon warned that “China is a sleeping giant. Let China sleep, when she wakes, she will shake the world” (p.6). By the time the United States has perceived the sleeping giant, China has already been awake and shaken the world. The United States who has enjoyed its superpower status in the post-cold war period, has been consuming its energy on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq when it became aware of the growing potential and power of China.

Especially Chinese success in economics and banking sector during the 2008 Global Financial Crisis and the growing impact of China's economic rise together with the Chinese initiatives as direct alternatives against the organizations of American-led world order have impelled the United States to adopt a new foreign policy. This need for regenerate the course of foreign policy paved the way for prioritizing Asia-Pacific region for the U.S. and led Obama administration to adopt Asia Pivot as a new foreign policy orientation. Under the Asia Pivot policy, which was announced in 2011, Obama Administration has considered China as a “partner, competitor and strategic rival”.

After grasping the importance of Asia-Pacific in terms of global economy, trade, military, political and cultural developments in post 2008 period, the United States has defined and reconstructed itself as both “Pacific and Atlantic nation” with creating a new foreign policy orientation aiming at turning its face to the Asia-Pacific region in 2010s. For this end, Barack Obama announced the “Asia Pivot” policy in Australian Parliament on December 17, 2011, only thirty-seven days after the publishment of his Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s Foreign Policy article “America’s Pacific Century” which determined the main points of the American Pivot to Asia.

With the immense growth of Chinese economy as well as its military and political activities and China’s replacement of the U.S. economy as the number one by 2020, the U.S. has found that rings bell for itself. Therefore, forming a new foreign policy for China and Asia Pivot has become a necessity for the U.S. rather than an option. Allison (2022) argues that “while Presidents Obama, Trump, and Biden have talked about a historic “pivot” to Asia, the seesaw has shifted to the point that both of America’s feet are dangling entirely off the ground. (p.12)

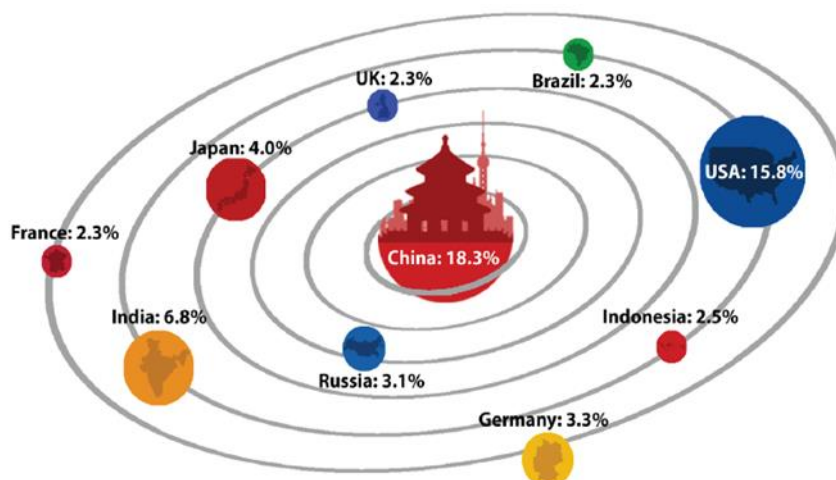


Figure 1. Percentage of Global Gross Domestic Production (PPP, Int\$), 2020 (Allison et al., 2022, p.6)

However, after former president Barack Obama who was seen as an advocator of multilateralism, Donald Trump has toughened the U.S. stance by accusing and targeting China directly. By 2019, the U.S.-China rivalry has remained on the agenda with President Trump's imposition of extra tariff on Chinese goods initiating the U.S.-China Trade War. By 2020, with the outbreak of a global coronavirus pandemic in Wuhan, China, the U.S.-China rivalry has reached a new stage. In this new stage of American Chinese rivalry which has characterized the twenty first century, along with material factors, ideational factors and identities become prominent.

Stemming from the birthplace of Coronavirus disease, China and Chinese people, Asians in global, have started to be defined as the main reason and source of global disease which costs millions of lives and global economic downturn. With President Trump's famous phrase depicting the COVID-19 as a simple "Chinese virus", and his overall discourses directing China, these denotations have gained universal characteristics and led to the rise of Anti-Chinese Sentiment. In this regard, when the denotations and reconceptualization of China and Chinese identity who are seen as the main cause of the global pandemic in twenty first century are analyzed, these expressions do not stand as the brand-new artifacts. Rather, these stereotypical expressions targeting China and Chinese people have a deep-rooted historical background. Hence, this study aims at focusing the ideational factors, namely identities which give meanings to the material factors in the U.S.- China rivalry with the historical

development and background of these identities and the employment of these identities.

When the U.S.-China rivalry has been examined within the framework of social constructivist analysis, the U.S. has (re)constructed China as a strategic rival and regional partner at first in 2011, and then as a direct threat in 2020 based on the material factors. Herein, this thesis aims to examine two discourses from the year 2011 when China attracted the full U.S. attention to its rapid economic growth which led to the development of a new Asia policy of Obama Administration, and year 2020 when the U.S. has perceived China as a direct threat due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thus, it can be said that the twenty-first century has characterized by the new race between the United States and China and its worldwide projections. Since the U.S., has faced with a different kind of antagonist which named as competitor at the beginning, then rival: the People's Republic of China (PRC). This time, a similar pattern that the U.S. follows to construct its adversaries, can be observed in American Chinese relations and American perceptions about Chinese identity, due to China's rise and its challenge against the U.S. However, China is both different and important than the previous ones because of the historical roots of Chinese identity and Anti-Chinese sentiment in the U.S. which dated back to the nineteenth century.

American construction of Chinese identity has varied in different periods. When first Chinese immigrants arrived in the U.S., there was almost a neutral stance towards them. As time passed by, with the influx of new Chinese immigrant workers with their families Americans started to react against the situation. China and especially Chinese Americans were depicted with stereotypes which has negative connotations. This period was marked with the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 in order to restrict the Chinese entrance to the U.S. On May 6, 1882, Congress enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act, which legally prohibited Chinese from freely entering the United States, The Chinese Exclusion Act became the first national legislation that banned immigrants based on race (Song, 2002, p.385). The basis of Chinese identity in the U.S. has taken its source from the American experiences with Chinese immigrants in this period. However, the identity of Chinese has also changed over time.

The identity of China and Chinese in the eyes of Americans have changed during the Second World War since the U.S. declared China as its ally during the war. Yet, in a

short period of time in 1949 with the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the identity of China and the Chinese people changed and became a new threat of "Red China" indicating its communist ideology and danger. This image has changed with the historical visit of Henry Kissinger as the Secretary of State and President Nixon to China in 1972. From that time on, the U.S.-China relations started to normalize within the framework of American policies indicating China as an American friend and an important counterweight to the Soviet Union (Sachs, 2019, p.1).

With the Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms which started from 1978, the world has witnessed one of the greatest economic booms, but now in Asia. At that time, there was a consensus in the U.S. that this economic boom and Chinese integration to the liberal economic order will eventually be led to the Chinese reforms which will turn China into a liberal democracy. Yet, as Layne (2004) concludes that Beijing does not act as the theory of interdependence leads to peace suggests (p.72). Although Deng Xiaoping and Chinese intellectuals came up with the theory of "peaceful rise of China" reflecting the Deng Xiaoping's note: "Lie low. Hide your capabilities. Bide your time" (Layne, 2018, p.106), with the start of Xi Jinping's term as president has changed the course of American Chinese relations. More specifically, from the 2000s onwards, China started to challenge against the U.S. in the economic, military, institutional and ideational pillars (Layne, 2018, p.93). The establishment of Chinese institutions such as Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Eurasian Economic Union and BRICS (Brazil, India, China, South Africa) raised questions about the intentions of China since these institutions has generally seen as alternatives to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB), namely the U.S. led institutions and world order. The Chinese challenge against the American hegemony in economic, military and ideologic terms sparked various reactions. Starting from the President Obama the tension between the U.S. and China gradually increased. Since American foreign policy decision makers has inferred that this "challenge also damaged America's status and ideational power" (Layne, 2018, p.100).

Therefore, China has been started to be referred as new "bête noire" by American experts and officials (Sachs, 2019, p.4). In 2009, in the first term of Obama's presidency, China was observed as partner of the United States, but it has changed within three years. In 2012, due to the increasing economic, military power of China alarmed Obama Administration. Together with Obama's "Pivot to Asia" policy, China

has declared as both an adversary and strategic partner (Sachs, 2019, p.4). With the beginning of Donald Trump's term, American Chinese relations has entered more turbulent period fueled by the speeches of President Trump about how China steals American jobs at home and how China dares to challenge against the United States. Under his most famous motto "Make America Great Again", President Trump has accused China of theft, especially in intellectual property, and a source of new infectious disease, the outbreak of Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID 19). These allegations used by Trump to gather support from his supporters, mainly blew the Anti-Chinese Sentiment in the U.S., and the revival of old stereotypical features attributed to the Chinese people. One can clearly see the identical adjectives, stereotypical depictions for addressing Chinese people are the same ones which were used in the nineteenth century against the Chinese immigrants. Historical roots of Chinese identity in the American history are important source of analyzing the American foreign policy and its documents about China and herself.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The self-image of the United States, namely the American identity has divided the U.S. sharply from the rest of the world with depicting and underlying the exceptional nature of the U.S. (Nau, 2002, p.1). In a sense, American identity has imprinted on its foreign policy orientations and strategies throughout its history. Although the foreign policy of the United States has generally been examined within the realist perspectives, the constitutive role of its identity cannot be denied. In this context, the emergence of China as a challenger against the U.S. led global order and directly American hegemony does not trigger only the realist policies or reactions. The role of ideational constructions, namely the identity of "the other" against the American identity, has been intertwined with those realist politics. The construction and implementation of ideational forces that dictates and echoes the exceptional and superior nature of the American identity over the identity of "the other" can be seen as one of the fundamental features of the American foreign policy from the various examples in the U.S. history.

Starting from the 1990s and accelerated in 2000s, rise of China has become one of the hot topics of the American foreign policy since the dangers pose from a new and different kind of rival with a huge population, unique characteristics and growing economic, military, and political capabilities. In this respect, this thesis aims at examining the U.S. construction of China as a threat for itself stemming from China's

rise together with development and alteration of the identity of China which have been reflected in the two selected discourses from 2011 and 2020.

The research question of this thesis is “How has the U.S. constructed China as a direct threat to its hegemony after 2010 due to the economic and political rise of China?” With reference to the social constructivism, the aim of the thesis to examine the importance of ideational forces as well as material ones, specifically the crucial role of identities in the U.S. foreign policy in the light of the historical development and construction of both American and Chinese identities in the United States. Within the framework of this main question, this study adopts discourse-historical analysis as the methodology to analyze Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s Foreign Policy article “America’s Pacific Century” issued on October 15, 2011, and President Donald Trump’s speech at the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 22, 2020 to find out how the identity of China has been constructed differently in 2011 and 2020. The main reason for selecting discourses for this research from 2011 and 2020 is that these two different years reflect two distinct identities of China for the U.S. administrations due to China’s growing economic, political, and military strength increasing day by day. Even before the Chinese overtook the U.S. as the world’s largest economy in 2011, the U.S. has started to take China as a strategic rival and a regional power with which it could cooperate on certain issues in Asia-Pacific as it can be seen in Clinton’s article “America’s Pacific Century” which announces the main pillars of the U.S. policy of Asia Pivot. After having comprehended the outcomes of China’s rise from Chinese overtook the U.S. on all economic scales, the U.S. has started to take China as a direct threat to itself and accordingly has constructed the identity of China as other and threat. By 2020, when the Chinese victory has been clear by its leadership on all economic scales surpassing the U.S., American stance and (re)construction of the identity of China has evolved and China has started to be announced as the arch-rival of the U.S. by the former president Trump.

On that account, the dependent variable of the thesis is United States foreign policy conducted by the American authorities towards China, and the independent variable is American identity which consists of situational variables as historical development of Anti-Chinese sentiment in the U.S. started from 19th century Chinese immigration, and policy variables such as the rise of Anti-Chinese Sentiment in the U.S. both domestically and internationally stemming from the previously established identities in

the nineteenth century and impact of the rise of China as a threat for the American national interests.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In line with the main research question to find out the U.S. construction of identity of China in 2011 and in 2020, this thesis deals with literature in terms of the construction of “Chinese other”. Although the rise of China has brought forth the process of examining the concept of Chinese other, many researchers illustrate that ‘Chinese other’ actually is a deep-rooted concept which dated back to the nineteenth century (Turner 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016; Tan 2011; Pan 2004; Jin et al. 2021; Khoo 2021; Nymalm 2019; Yao 2021; Ooi and D’Arcangelis 2017; Turner and Kaarbo 2021). The Rise of China initiated the rearticulation and reproduction of historical discourses of Chinese Threat in the U.S. Since China does not pose a danger only on American material power but it challenges against the ideological foundation and hegemony of the U.S. as the founder and leader of the liberal world order with a Chinese alternative.

Turner (2016) poses a crucial question that causes of India’s rise does not attract American attention as China’s rise does. The exact answer to this question is that the U.S. does not take India as a threat due to its adherence to the American led world order. That is to say, India rises in the shade of the U.S., it is not a deal broker as China. Moreover, within the framework of critical geopolitics and post-colonial theory, Turner (2016) indicates that American geopolitical discourses inherit same discursive representations which enhance the construction of ideal American self and the other. Therefore, American self is responsible to protect the world order as the leader of free world.

Turner (2013) portrays that the theme of “threatening China” stands as enduring concept in different periods of American history. Starting from the stereotypical identification of Chinese immigrant workers in the U.S. as “yellow peril”, China as American ally, ‘Red China with the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, and then the depiction of coronavirus as “Chinese virus” by the American president, the Chinese other is constructed deliberately and intentionally in the American context. Turner (2013) contends that different periods and particular American policies led to the particular Chinese identity construction as a response the challenges. Turner and Kaarbo (2021) analyzes Donald Trump’s China policies within the framework of his

leadership and personal characteristics. As an original, extraordinary, and unusual American political figure, Trump is closely interested in China, hot topic of American foreign policy in the twenty-first century. Unlike other American presidents, Trump's foreign policy is mainly shaped by his own statements and announcements which can be called as 'leader diplomacy' and 'twiplomacy' meaning Twitter diplomacy.

Turner and Kaarbo (2021) point out that just like his personality, Trump's foreign policy has an 'unpredictable' nature changing day by day. Therefore, his China policy is characterized by impulsivity, emotion, and provocation, too (Turner and Kaarbo, 2021, p.8). Trump's depiction of China as the supporter of the U.S.-North Korean nuclear talks changed suddenly and Trump changed his attitude towards China by claiming that Beijing is responsible for the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic in 2020 and for the worldwide lockdowns and problems. In the same way, Trump's thoughts about Chinese president Xi Jinping also have changed frequently. First, he praised Xi Jinping as good and strong man holding enormous power, then called Jinping as dictator. Turner and Kaarbo (2021) concludes that the unpredictable aspect of Trump's leadership paves the way for the loss of American prestige and leadership. Moreover, in domestic realm, Trump's rhetoric on anti-Chinese stance as he has employed during the coronavirus pandemic, results in the rise of negative thoughts and anti-Chinese sentiment in the American public.

In his complex study of tracing stereotypical images and identifications which are used to point Chinese in the U.S., Oliver Turner (2014) highlights that current Chinese images in the American perception actually date back to the nineteenth century. These images stand as central themes in the U.S.-China relations, since behind the American policies and actions towards China, these identifications are in a process of active reproduction. Turner (2014) demonstrates that the concept of "Chinese threat" is not a brand-new challenge for the U.S. Both Chinese challenge and American response to it, are not unilateral. Rather, both Chinese challenge and American response composed of material and ideological factors.

In "The Change of Public Opinion on U.S.-China Relations", Qingshan Tan (2011) examines the American public opinion towards China's rise and its impact on American domestic policy. The negative opinions about China started to rise in mid 1990s in the American public, but with the September 11 attacks, rise of China did not grasp much attention as it does today. Although the policy of 'peaceful rise of China' which was

adopted by Chinese authorities, calmed the situation, but for a while. Later on, starting with 2000s, negative feelings towards China have risen.

Analyzing 'China threat' literature, Chengxin Pan (2004) argues that discursive constructions of China as a threat, is directly related to the 'American self'. As self-fulfilling practices, these discursive constructions are one of the main components of the American foreign policy which are used in order to legitimize policies. The concept of 'China threat' includes economic, military, cultural, ideological, and political spheres. Pan (2004) illustrates that economic realm draws attention due to the rise of Chinese economic power. Hence, Americans perceive this situation as one of the main reasons behind the American unemployment and fall of American factories in the U.S. Since economic growth makes way for the growth and new developments in military which directly threaten America, the U.S. policy makers draw parallels between the rise of Chinese military power and Nazi Germany indicating the upcoming danger posed by the communist China. Moreover, by emphasizing the importance of American self-imagination and construction of 'the other' in the U.S.-China relations, Pan (2004) connotes that American exceptionalism which reproduces the certain characteristics of ideal and superior America, is the driven factor behind the American self. Likewise, China sees itself in a positive way with the Middle Kingdom tradition just an opposite of the U.S., as Pan (2004) asserts "mirror image of American self". Listing the historical 'others' for the America from its history, Pan (2004) concludes that behind American Chinese rivalry, not only material capabilities but also identities and characterizations of both sides are at stake.

In order to examine the reflections of American public over the U.S.-China trade war, which was initiated by the President Trump, Jin et al. (2021) analyzed the surveys about the American domestic opinion. Jin et al. (2021) came up with that although Americans have little experience with China and Chinese people, trade war has impacted the American public opinion and their perceptions about China. Jin et al. (2021) observe that more than economic policies and concerns of the U.S.-China trade war, political orientations and ideologies call the attention of American public.

Nicholas Khoo (2021) points the changes of tones towards China in the U.S. official documents especially after the 2010s when depiction of China has shifted from 'partner' to 'revisionist power'. In 2000, China was named as 'strategic competitor' in the documents due to the change in Beijing's activities such as growing military

presence and impacting global economy. Although China was started to be portrayed as revisionist, September 11 attacks put China on the back. Yet, with the Donald Trump's presidency American tone towards China has changed and has taken a rough stance toward China. From 2019 onwards, China has become the primary concern for the U.S. Even, the U.S. has started to employ its oldest strategy, beginning to depict China as communist threat referring the Marxist-Leninist state ideology of the People's Republic of China. Moreover, the U.S. has used this strategy to portray Chinese president Xi Jinping with some adjectives such as dictator, authoritarian, revisionist and aggressive which are the adjectives attributed the threat discourse.

Nicola Nymalm (2019) examines the similarities between the depiction and identity constructions of 'Japan threat' and 'Chinese threat'. Both as economically successful 'non-Western' states, Nymalm (2019) states that Japan and China have exposed to the allegations. Japan's economic rise in 1970s and 1980s raised question marks in the U.S. as China's rise does today. The term "Pax Nipponica/Japonica" was articulated by the American elites who were worried about the power transition between the U.S. and Japan, that resembles the current debates between "Washington consensus" versus "Beijing consensus". Japan's Western counterparts did not admit that they are equal. Instead, Japan was subjected to some stereotypes such as 'oriental', 'tribal', 'non-Western', 'non-liberal' and 'communal'. On the contrary, the U.S. and its Western allies were 'good guys', 'generous' and 'fair'. Nymalm (2019) makes an analogy between Japan and China as well as their representations. The same pattern can be observed in the ways which are used to portray China, just like the Japan in 1970s and 1980s, as 'oriental', 'corrupt', 'communist', 'dictatorship' and 'totalitarian'.

Yang Yao (2021) draws parallel between Donald Trump's China policy and the Cold War. Just like the U.S. employed 'anti-communist rhetoric' against the Soviet Union in the Cold War, Trump administration has applied same logic to Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its Marxist-Leninist ideology which are described as a serious threat for the America and the world. American emphasis and assistance to Taiwan and launching a trade war between the U.S. and China, relations has started to be tense than ever. Yet, the interdependence and interconnected nature of American Chinese relations characterized the relations more complex than the American Soviet relations during the Cold War, since both sides need each one especially on important aspects

such as pandemics that the world has witnessed in 2020. However, outbreak of pandemic has escalated the tension between two countries because of Trump's rhetoric mostly. From 2019 on, America has started to toughen its rhetoric against China. Cyber and intellectual property thefts, communist ideology, and historical identification of China as 'the threat' for itself are the underlying causes of the dramatic change in US foreign policy towards China.

Ooi and D'Arcangelis (2017) analyze the news media and political rhetoric on how China is depicted in the U.S. discourse. They find out that oriental themes have applied to depict China as inferior. There are several negative adjectives such as 'cunning', 'sneaky', 'immoral' and concepts such as 'yellow peril', 'red peril', and 'currency manipulator'. Both historical and contemporary adjectives are used to identify Chinese people and characteristics exact opposite of American characteristics. Certain images and stereotypes for China have different meanings. For instance, the image of 'cheating China' or 'sneaky China' connotes the Chinese uniformity of liberal order, laws and rules, and its efforts to change it as well as cyber and intellectual theft. The image of China as 'currency manipulator' indicates the rise Yuan and Chinese manufacture sector as main reason of American unemployment. Ooi and D'Arcangelis (2017) concludes that the reproduction of Chinese identity with negative imageries has political aims in order to encounter China and justify the steps taken by the American authorities to contain China and Chinese influence. Therefore, Donald Trump also made use of these identities for win election and gain support from American public.

This thesis aims to analyze the U.S. construction of China as a threat for its superpower status stemming from China's rise together with development and alteration of the identity of China echoed in two selected discourses from 2011 and 2020. Therefore, this thesis adopts social constructivism in order to examine how ideational structure and forces, namely American identity which takes its roots from the concept of American exceptionalism, have influenced the American foreign policy by constructing American self-identity and Chinese as the other. With regard to the given context, the main intend of this thesis is to explore how American self-identity construction and the identity of China is applied by the U.S. embedded in discourses to comprehend how these discursive practices and strategies have been used for legitimization of American actions against a determined other, an adversary which is constructed deliberately.

The research question together with the aim of the thesis and literature review were given in the introduction part of thesis.

In the first chapter, social constructivism as theoretical framework of thesis together with social identity theory and discourse historical approach as a method will be introduced.

As a response to the sub research question of this thesis, the second chapter aims to find answer of “What are the characteristics of American Exceptionalism and its impact on the U.S. foreign policy?” Additionally, in accordance with the discourse historical approach which urges examination of historical roots of specific discourses, the second chapter of thesis also presents the historical, religious, and cultural background of the American exceptionalism and its impact on the U.S. foreign policy.

The third chapter of this thesis aims to find out proper answers to the question “What are the characteristics that Americans attributed to China and Chinese in the U.S.?” Therefore, starting from the nineteenth century to the Rise of China, the history of the Chinese identity construction in the U.S. will be drawn in order to comprehend how Chinese other has constructed in American context.

In order to reply to the question “How do American construction of self-identity and Chinese identity reflected in Clinton’s 2011 foreign policy article and Trump’s 2020 speech at United Nations General Assembly?”, the fourth chapter aims to examine the (re)construction and alteration of the identity of China as threat in the Hillary Clinton’s “America’s Pacific Century” and President Trump’s speech at 75th Session of United Nations General Assembly with Discourse-Historical Approach.

In the last chapter, this thesis concludes that American construction of ‘self’ versus ‘the other’ is articulated in discursive practices deliberately in order to reinforce self-identity, legitimize the forthcoming steps and actions, and what is more important is that as constructivism defends that these particular identifications are driving force behind the material factors.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

The period beginning with 1980s and the end of the Cold War, marked not only a new era and a new world order, but also new approaches and methodological tools to analyze those changes as well as the older ones. These brand-new approaches have emerged within the field of International Relations out of the questions of changes. It is widely acknowledged that the rise of constructivism emerged in the IR when traditional IR theories, namely realism and liberalism, were unable to foresee and interpret the abrupt end of Cold War (Checkel, 1998). End of the cold war together with the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. have changed the course of history and international politics and the framework of IR into a more open and indefinite atmosphere. In such an atmosphere, “old parsimonious traditional theories were not able to offer new perspectives for new problems. (Jackson and Sørensen, 2013, p. 211) Taking its roots in various social sciences ranging from sociology to history, social constructivism offers a new perspective on analyzing the international politics within the framework of the role, impact and changing nature of ideational structures as well as the material ones. Ba and Hoffman (2003) argue that in the never-ending cycle of change of world and world politics, one can need the social constructivist perspective to investigate the active nature of the world politics (p.18). The term, constructivism coined by the Nicholas Onuf and introduced to the International Relations (IR) discipline with his book *World of Our Making* in 1989. After Onuf, constructivist school of thought in IR started to become popular with the significant book and articles of Alexander Wendt (1987, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1999) (Jackson and Sørensen, 2013, p.215).

As the eponym of the constructivism, Nicholas Onuf epitomizes the core assumption of constructivism that “the world is of our making” (Onuf 1989) as the name of his book suggests (Flockhart, 2016, p.80). Onuf highlighted that constructivism is based on the ground of the idea that society and people reproduce themselves and this constitute “a continuous, two-way process” (Onuf 2013, p.4). Onuf formulated his constructivist analysis with discussion and interpretation of philosophy and social theory, with “a close reading of texts” (Zehfuss, 2002, p.19). Therefore, Onuf considers language as an important source of analysis, and it serves as the major purpose of social construction for Onuf (Jung, 2019, p.7). As Kubalkova (1998) points out that Onuf

takes language as a strong tool which has creative potential on social constructions and as a continuous activity participated by everyone (p.19). Analyzing language and agent within a constructivist framework, Onuf puts forward that “language makes us who we are” (as cited in Jung, 2019, p.7).

After Onuf, Alexander Wendt who is generally associated with the social constructivism in International Relations, has contributed to the social constructivist literature, in a sense, popularized it after the publication of *Anarchy is What States Make of It* which later on became the catchphrase of the constructivism, in 1992. Stressing the social constructivist nature of international politics and the role of intersubjective forces Wendt, in a way, challenged against the old-established school of IR theories by emphasizing the role and great impact of ideas over the material forces.

In his *Anarchy is What States Make of It*, Wendt (1992) analyzes the IR concept of anarchy. Rather than taking traditional notion of anarchy as a pre-existing reality meaning absence of a higher authority to control the international politics which creates a self-help system, Wendt argues that the anarchy is a concept originated from the “particular intersubjective understandings” about the relationship between states (Flockhart, 2016, p.82). For Wendt (1999) puts forward, anarchy is “an empty vessel without an intrinsic logic”, the only way of gaining character and logic for anarchy is through the socially constructed meanings and structures that we, as agents create (p.249).

Wendt’s critical stance of realist notion of anarchy contends that such concepts as anarchy, rivalry, enmity, or partnership can be observed better within a constructivist framework, that is to say, considering the socially constructed nature of the anarchy (Hurd, 2008, p.305). Hence, anarchy appears in the collective minds of the states stemming from the social interaction, historical and social experiences, and intersubjective meanings. “Agents and actors obtain their stable, role-specific identities, understandings and expectations about self—by participating in such collective meaning” (Wendt, 1992, p.397). The ideational structure of anarchy also makes room for the possibility of change. The unexpected change and end of Cold War stand as an example of it. As Wendt (1999) suggests that in case of a reconciliation between the United States and the Soviet Union, ‘the Cold War is over’. Since the power of collective and intersubjective meanings over the construction of structure is the source of action of states.

In order to reflect the importance and constitutive power of social structures on the meanings and interpretations of the material power capabilities, Wendt makes use of several examples from the international politics. Wendt refers that considering only material part of power distribution leads to miss out the essence of the issue. Since constructivists approve the fact that distribution of power matters in determining the actions of states, but “intersubjective meanings, ideas and expectations on the distribution of knowledge” which generates the construction of self and other identities, are the driving force behind the material concept (Wendt, 1992, p.397). Hence, Wendt (1992) illustrates that the American military power can be observed differently from Canadian and Cuban point of view, although American military might, and quality remain the same, just as the importance and degree of risks stemming from the missiles of Britain and Soviet Union for the U.S. (p.397).

In his article titled “Constructing International Politics”, Wendt (1995) considers that in a constructivist analysis, state interests are seen as constructed by systemic structures which are seen as not only material but also social structure (p.72). For constructivists, these social structures comprised of shared knowledge, material resources and practices. Practices also matter in examining the social structures within the constructivist analysis. Since practices inherit the social structures in the course of action. For Wendt (1995) Cold War is a concept and product of the shared knowledge and practice stemming from it (p.74). He argues that as long as sides agree on preserving the concept and mentality of great power politics, Cold War goes on.

Along with the contributions of Onuf and Wendt, several constructivist scholars come up with different themes, characteristics, and research interests. Although constructivists are classified into different categories such as conventional and critical constructivism by Hopf (1998) or positivist, interpretivist and postmodern by Fearson and Wendt (2005), all constructivists agree on several common principles of the social constructivism.

Constructivism for Ruggie (1998) is “human consciousness and its role in the international life and politics” (p.856). Adler (1997) also infers that constructivism is the theory that analyzes the concepts with a method which takes “material world as a product which is shaped by the human actions and interactions depending on normative and epistemic interpretations of it” (p.322). Three most important principles make up the constructivism as a “metatheoretical commitment.” The first one is the

epistemological claim of constructivist idea of socially constructed knowledge. As ontological claim, constructivism asserts that social reality is also constructed. Lastly, the mutually constitutive nature of knowledge, reality and actions is the reflexive claim of constructivism (as cited in Jung, 2019, pp.1-2).

Social constructivism positions a middle ground, *via media*, approach between rationalist IR theories and poststructuralist approaches. This *via media* approach highlights constructivism's social ontology and common epistemology with the mainstream IR theories with a critical focus and analysis of IR concepts such as state interests, identity, and change (Kierke, 2013 p.196). As 'via-media' approach, constructivism shares some common concepts with neorealism such as the states as principal actor of IR, the role of structure in international politics, the impact on anarchy on the actions of states, the definition of interests of states, the concept of power and the possibility of change. However, constructivism differs from rationalist theories on its emphasis of such concepts as the dual nature of power both material and discursive, the possibility and difficulty of change in international politics, identity construction as the source of state interests, multiple and open-ended nature of anarchy instead of one single definition, and the idea that agents and structures mutually constitute and construct each other (Ted Hopf, 1998, p.181).

Not only the important role of ideas, beliefs, and norms, but also relationships between agents and structure are also one of the topics in which constructivism is interested. Constructivism considers that the agents of world politics are not uniform individuals whose identities are pre-given. Instead, these agents are social creatures with unique identities which are shaped by the social, historical, political, and cultural as well as material forces (Kierke, 2013, p.191).

As Ba and Hoffman (2007) illustrates that the cycle of social construction which indicates the mutually socially constructed actors and context, summarizes the core of constructivist theory. The actions and interactions of this cycle among the actors and their surroundings, the society and social context, maintain the cyclical process (p.21).

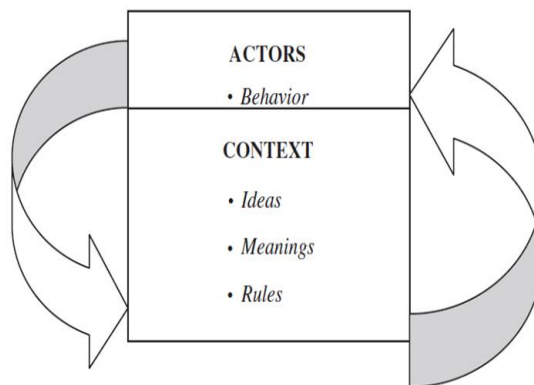


Figure 2. The mutual interaction of actors and context (Ba & Hoffmann, 2003, p.22)

Within the concept of 'logic of consequences', agents or actors are expected to choose appropriate action to maximize their benefits. However, Mary and Olsen infer that agents who are thought to act within logic of consequences, may also act in accordance with 'logic of appropriateness'. Apart from rationalist 'logic of consequences' stemming from rational choice which prioritize profits, agents may also be guided by their identities, they may follow appropriate paths and choose certain actions in accordance with their particular identities and intersubjective beliefs (Kierke, 2013, p.190). Thus, constructivist emphasis on the identity signifies that agents or actors both embrace the rules and norms stemming from the particular identities and act in accordance with them. Within this context, agents which are constructed by a certain identity, choose to act appropriately (Flockhart, 2016, p.87). "Within a logic of appropriateness, a sane person is one who is 'in touch with identity' in the sense of maintaining consistency between behavior and a conception of self in a social role" (as cited in Sending, 2002, p.449).

Flockhart (2016) defines identity as "the understanding of oneself, its position in social world and its relations with others" (p.87). Constructivists attach a great importance to the identity in terms of a self-definition of identity as well as the construction of 'the other' vis a vis self-identity. Since through constructing 'the other', self-identity of state is "always in a process of reconstruction and representation (Flockhart, 2016, p.87). The main reason of constructivist emphasis on the importance of identities is a belief that "identities strongly connote specific sets of interests, ideas and preferences with respect to choose of action" (Hopf, 1998, p.175). Identities are made up of intersubjective ideas, "the logic of ideology" and old-established notions of friendship and enmity (Reus Smith, 2005, p.196)

Although identity is accepted as a central concept of social constructivism, several social constructivist scholars investigate identities by focusing different realms. The studies of Alexander Wendt (1992, 1994), Peter J. Katzenstein (1996) and Ted Hopf (2002) analysis of the impact of identities on the state actions and preferences are leading examples. Analysis of Alexander Wendt put emphasis on the impact of international environment. Whereas the works of Peter J. Katzenstein and Ted Hopf inclined to the domestic realm of the state identities, that is to say historical, social and cultural sources which shape the identities and in turn the actions of the states (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001, pp.398-399)

Identity analysis of Wendt illustrates the example of systemic constructivism meaning that his focus is mainly on the international interactions between states. Wendt (1992) argues that "it is the very interactions with others that create and instantiate one structure of identities and interests rather than another" (p.394). For Wendt, there are two categorizations of the identities of the state as social and corporate identities. Social identity is the role and status of a particular state which is attributed by the international society. Corporate identity is the total of domestic sources including "human, material, ideological and cultural factors of a state (Reus Smith, 2005, p.199).

By putting the self-identities of the states in a secondary position after their system level identities, the self-identities of the states gained a characteristic and used as a tool fitting the state roles which originate from their interstate position and culture (Alexandrov, 2003, p.35). In this respect, Wendt concentrates on mainly the impact of structural processes and strategic practices on the production and reproduction of particular and diverse state identities (Reus Smith, 2005, p.199). Since he considers states as unitary actors in international politics, he concentrates on the cultures of anarchy as well as the shared understandings and knowledge among the states not individuals. That is why Wendt draw categories of "three ideal types of interstate level social structure as Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian cultures of anarchy". (Alexandrov, 2003, p.35). He draws attention to the cultures of anarchy due to the mutually constitutive relations between states and identities of them. The importance of those cultures indicates their role and perceptions of self-identity and the other as well as determining the approach of the states towards others in terms of use of force (Wendt, 1999, p. 258).

Contrary to Wendt's systemic analysis of state identity, Peter J. Katzenstein and Ted Hopf examine the impact of domestic determinants on the role of state identities which in turn shape the actions and choices of states. In his book *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (1996a) Katzenstein accepts that history, culture, and social norms of a particular society matter in shaping the self-identity of a state. By pointing out the deficiencies of Wendt's systemic analysis of state identity, Katzenstein points out that studying internal dimension of identity is necessary since the internal characteristics and identity of a state have great impact on how states perceive themselves and their actions towards other states. (Jackson and Sorensen, 2013, p.223). As Katzenstein (1996a) puts forth that "we can broaden our analytical perspective, to include culture as well as identity as important causal factors that help define the interests and constitute the actors that shape national security policies and global insecurities" (p.537). To illustrate this, Katzenstein analyses that the domestic change of Japanese military position within Japanese government eventually paved the way for shift in Japanese foreign policy to become a pacifist one.

Similarly, Ted Hopf and his analysis of Russian domestic identity and the impact of domestic identity on the Russian and Soviet foreign policy illustrate the impact of domestic factors on determining the state identity and construction of 'the other'. Since constructivism takes the identities and selves of the states as variables which depends on the "historical, cultural, political and social context, Hopf (1998) defends that the historical and social examination of self-identity is important aspect of constructivist analysis (p.176). For Hopf (2002), defining the self is important step to construction of both self and outsider, 'the other' (p.5). Therefore, it can be said that domestic source of identity construction matters a lot since states or societies have to locate themselves at the center with attributing certain characteristics to themselves first, then differentiate others from their own identities. As Hopf (2002) asserts that "domestic identity is to explore how states understand themselves through domestic others, how state identities are constructed at home as well as through interstate interaction" (p.10). That is to say, Hopf (2002) provides a description of the formative impact of domestic identity of a state and its constitutive as well as constructive power to build and differentiate identities as 'the other' or "threats, opportunities, enemies and allies" (p.16). In order to analyze the construction of national interests determining the state actions and grasped the essence of world politics, the social context of states should be examined

(Jackson and Sorensen, 2014, p.224). Moreover, Hopf (2002) extends his analytical framework by examining the discursive constructions and practices of a particular state's identity vis a vis another state (p.294). Since international, systemic, structure consists of different subcultures and identities, Hopf (2002) claims that there would be no systemic theory and analysis of identity (p.294).

1.2 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

As it is mentioned above, social constructivism has been influenced by various social sciences and adopt different perspectives and tools for analysis from these distinct fields. One of the social sciences which impress social constructivism is psychology, namely social psychology due to constructivist analysis and emphasis on the concept of identity. As social constructivism considers the concept of identity as one of the main factors affecting the behavior of policy makers and states. Moreover, the development of another concept, the logic of appropriateness, also indicates that social identities of certain groups are the factors determining set of behavior of actors in IR.

Hence social constructivism has been highly affected by the notion of social identity which has systematically developed by two leading sociopsychologists, Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1970s under the Social Identity Theory (SIT). As one of the most outstanding theories of social psychology, Social Identity Theory has examined the construction of social identity, in-group favoritism, social categorization, and development of other identity.

Rather than analyzing individuals and their identities, Social Identity Theory focuses on the importance and role of the identities related with groups, as groups determines the social identity of members. From the socio-psychological perspective, the term social group is defined and conceptualized as a term indicating the perception of individuals as members of same social category, their emotional involvement and belonging of their group, and social consensus among group members about the evaluation of their in-groups and their membership (Tajfel and Turner, 1986, p.15).

Social Identity Theory introduces concepts in formation of social identity: social categorization, social identification, and social comparison. Social Identity Theory implies that social categorization is the natural human tendency to make generalizations about the people, facts and other groups. The categories created by human beings function as the systematic classifications functioning as the social

indicators. Social categorization also provides information about the social world and one's self-identity as well as one's place in a specific group (Worley, 2021, p.2).

As Billig and Tajfel (1973) puts that social categorization is "an act of categorizing one's social world into different social groups, and into 'us' and 'them' (p.27). Dividing people into different groups, individuals categorize and identify themselves as the members of one or more groups. Here, social identity paves way for the self-evaluation. After having identified themselves and others as the member of a group, individuals have started to embrace the characteristics of their group and adopt certain aspects of group behavior (Worley, 2021, p.2).

Categorization of groups comes with the comparison, and these comparisons are generally not objective or neutral, as the individual identities carries a great number of characteristics of group identities. Identifying oneself with a group makes the personal identity reconstructed and reemphasized as well as group identity. Individuals tend to describe themselves as the members of a specific group (Mercer, 1995, p.244). Therefore, group identities determine and affect the personal identities of group members. That is why individuals seek to find and attribute positive qualities to their own group as better and different than other groups. Briefly, categorization is a cognitive requirement which needs comparisons and create a positive social identity of one's own group compared to out-groups. By exaggerating the positive image of in-group and differences between in-group and out-group, individuals preserve and raise their self-esteem. When the categorization makes individuals to make comparisons between their in-group and out-group, individuals strive to emphasize positive aspects of in-group identity over the out-group. In turn, this comparison and categorization makes individuals feel better about their in-group and social identity stemming from the membership of particular group (Mercer, 1995, p.242).

Social categorization also leads to the development of stereotypes and stereotypical identifications to describe and categorize individuals and groups. Many social psychologists such as Allport (1954) and Campbell (1956), find out that stereotypes are the outcomes of "selection and interpretation of social environment and social categorization" (Tajfel, 1982, p.20). The construction of stereotypes and categorization generally serves to preserve, maintain and "enhance the values systems" as the practices of distinction between different groups (Tajfel, 1982, p.21). The development of stereotypes and categorization have rooted in historical and social contexts, then

these constructed images have transferred to the generations. These stereotypes have become shared thoughts among the members of the groups and carried through the social channels (Tajfel, 1982, p.22). Tajfel (1982) lists the three social functions of the development and application of stereotypes. First, these stereotypes can be used in order to justify the actions targeting out-group. Second, stereotypes might be used as a “perception of social causality” especially in the events of widespread hard events such as inflation and unemployment as an excuse, since there is a need to be reduced the reasons of those hardships to an out-group. Third, they can be used as “a positive differentiation” of in-group from out-groups (p.22).

Within the framework of Social Identity Theory, Tajfel and Turner (1986) define their arguments as follows:

- I. Individuals strive to preserve or enhance their self-esteem; they struggle for the positive concept of self-identity.
- II. Social groups, categories and group membership are linked with positive or negative value connotations.
- III. The self-evaluation of a group is generally identified with reference and in relation to other groups through social comparisons in terms of value-laden attributes and qualities. Positively discrepant comparisons between in- group and out-group produce high prestige; negatively discrepant comparisons between in- group and out-group result in low prestige (p.16).

In brief, social groups are inclined to define and determine the qualities of their own groups more positively through comparing others. By doing these comparisons, they obtain an idealized and positive self- identity, and boost their self-esteem. In case of a dissatisfaction of one’s group, and social identity, individuals can leave their group, or they identify positive characteristics to define their groups (Udum, 2017, p.134).

1.3. DISCOURSE-HISTORICAL APPROACH AS A METHOD

In an inquiry, the main goal is to find proper answers for research questions by employing specific and suitable methodological tools in order to collect and analyze data to make out plausible outcomes and results. The importance of methodology underlines and displays the importance and context of the problem which will be analyzed during the course of the research. Methodology as a normative theory which focuses on the selection of research to produce knowledge, the process of research

dealing with the types of methods such as description, explanation, and justification (Wodak and Meyer, 2016, p.16).

Creswell (2023) classifies research approaches into three different categories of methodologies as quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (p.39). The main distinction between the quantitative and qualitative research is defined in terms of the usage of the verbal data as qualitative rather than numerical data as quantitative, and the mixed method which collects and makes use of mixture of qualitative and quantitative data within the research design (Creswell, 2023, p.40). As Creswell puts that constructivism, social constructivism, is applied in qualitative research due to the nature of constructivist theory which determines to investigate meanings, understandings, and intersubjective meanings of the world. Social and historical processes lie at the heart of these intersubjective meanings, ideas, and identities (Creswell, 2023, p.43). Within the framework of constructivist theory of international relations, Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is applied as a qualitative research method in this research, in order to trace the impact and construction of identity in U.S. foreign policy.

After the emergence of social constructivism in International Relations, particular methodological and research approaches are also started to get on the stage. Due to the pluralist methodological nature of constructivism, scholars have welcomed the proliferation of new approaches from different fields especially linguistic for examining the discourses. With the main aim of tracing the evolution of intersubjective ideas and identities, social constructivist scholars have interested in texts, documents, or other kinds of textual materials for inferring the construction of particular intersubjective meanings, ideas and norms originating from these documents. In order to point out the construction of these identities, constructivist scholars make use of several methodological approaches such as intertextual analysis, process tracing, counterfactual analysis, and discourse analysis (Aydın-Düzgıt and Rumelili, 2019, p. 289).

These methods all together mark different and vital characteristics of the constructivist research. While process tracing as a method demonstrates the change over time together with alteration of variables; counterfactuals assist researchers to further establish the relations between the variables. Discourse analysis on the other hand

guides researchers to uncover and understand the social constructions (Lupovici, 2009, p.201).

With the 1990s, social constructivist discourse analysis has introduced and gradually become popular among the social scientist, including international relations (Larsen, 2018, p.62). In order to reach wider and prevalent background and analysis for the emergence and identification of particular discourses, discourse analysis provides the historical and sociological context of the events and constructions of identities arising from these contexts (Lupovici, 2009, p.202).

Ted Hopf (2004) argues that discourse analysis is just like political theory since the language which is used as a medium projects power relations as well. Existing power relations can be observed in these discourses, and within the discursive utilization of these discourses the cycle of power relations is rearticulated and reproduced (p.31). The constructivist aim of discourse analysis is not emancipation but to define and illustrate the structures of shared and intersubjective meanings embedded in discursive texts. The core aim of discourse analysis is not to solve the problems but to investigate and point those problems and encourage further analysis (Hopf, 2004, p.31).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) emerged as a response to the criticisms against the discourse analysis due to its heavily reliance on linguistic analysis. Still taking its roots mainly on linguistic analysis of texts, critical discourse analysis has offered new critical lenses on examining the texts and discourses not only in terms of language studies, but also in terms of sociology, history, and international relations. (Aydın-Düzgüt and Rumelili, 2019, p.292). In other words, critical discourse analysis brings linguistic methods, social and cultural studies under the same roof.

Critical discourse analysis officially emerged after a group of scholars, Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak, gathered in a small conference in Amsterdam, January 1991. The beginning of the critical discourse analysis as a research group also initiated with the seminal works of the scholars such as *Language and Power* by Norman Fairclough (1989), Teun van Dijk's journal *Discourse and Society* (1990) and Ruth Wodak's *Language, Power and Ideology* (1989) (Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p.4).

The main goal of CDA is to examine both the visible and hidden structure and implementation of power, discrimination, dominance and control in discourse and texts. Ruth Wodak, one of the pioneers and founders of the critical discourse analysis (CDA) as well as discourse historical approach (DHA) indicates that “CDA aims to investigate critically as it is expressed, constituted, and legitimized by language use” (as cited in Huckin et al. 2012, p.108). As the name ‘critical’ signifies, CDA focuses on the particular relationship between language and power. It seeks to examine language and discourses in order to shed light on the social inequalities which are articulated, represented and legitimized in discourses (Wodak and Meyer 2001, p. 2). Basically, CDA seeks to examine the obscure and crystal-clear power structures of power, control, dominance, and discrimination within the language. Since as a critical approach, CDA takes language as a both reflection of power and knowledge nexus and a source of discourses which reproduce the dominant social and cultural views on particular concepts (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000, p.448).

Discourse and language hold such a power that through discourses and discursive practices, specific social and ideological concepts have emerged or consolidated. That is to say, “discourse is socially conditioned as well as socially constitutive” (Weiss and Wodak, 2003, p.13). Since “Discursive practices may have major ideological effects – that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations” (as cited in Weiss and Wodak 2003, page 13).

CDA scholars also regard ideology as one of the important aspects of their research due to its productive nature of establishing social inequalities and unequal power projections. CDA presumes that entanglement of power, ideology, social practices, and language forms a critical site to describe and investigate power politics. Hence, language can be used as a tool to explore the underlying power relations as well as challenge against these power projections which reproduce inequalities (Wodak and Meyer 2001, pp.10-11).

CDA scholars agree to a large extent that the complex power relations as well as social, cultural, and political representations beneath the surface of discourses, cannot be examined only with a single or strict methodological approach. The combination of linguistic, social, and historical approaches is must for investigate the true nature of discourses and shed light on the discursive practices (Weiss and Wodak, 2003, p.7).

In 1989, Ruth Wodak introduced the subbranch of CDA, discourse historical approach (DHA) as a historical perspective of analysis due to the need to a new focal point to research and explore the usage of language in institutional settings (Wodak and Meyer 2001, p.7). As one of the branches of CDA, DHA separates itself from others with its distinct feature of analysis and emphasis on construction of identities which is particularly interested in discursive construction of 'us' versus 'them' dichotomy embedded in texts and discourses of identity, difference, and discrimination (Aydın-Düzgüt and Rumelili, 2019, p.293). Wodak defines DHA as a type of CDA which aims at integrating historical, political, and affective levels into research. Typical characteristic of DHA is its approach to combine the background information of the study together with multilayered interpretations of the texts and discourses (Wodak and Reisigl, 1999, p.186).

Involving historical dimension of analysis into critical discourse analysis, DHA examines the historical background of texts and discourses as well as the changes of particular linguistic tools over the different courses of time. DHA admits the "systematic, explicit and transparent and reproducible" examination of historical as well as intertextual dimension of discursive practices. By employing historical analysis and combining the social theories, DHA examines shifts in discursive practices and transformations over time (Wodak 2011, p.628).

DHA asserts that texts and discourses are the sites for power relations. Since through discursive strategies particular ideologies, inequalities, power, and hegemonic discourses have prevailed and redistributed. That's why DHA takes a critical position towards the texts and discourses which are seen as the embodiments of the concept of ideology and power. Adding historical dimension on the critical analysis of discourses, DHA traces the foundations of those ideological and hegemonic representations, especially 'the other'. Thus, "demystifying" the discourses from their ideological and hegemonic roots, is one of the most distinguishable aspects of DHA (Wodak 2015, p.4).

DHA takes discourses as free and hybrid concepts which open itself for change, brand new concepts and topics. In this respect, intertextuality and interdiscursivity are seen as the source of change and novelty. Adopting DHA as a methodology which regards written, verbal, and visual sources as its resources of research, makes room for interdisciplinarity. and it takes discourses as linguistic social practices which both

produces and presents “non-discursive” and “discursive social practices” and reconstituted by them (Wodak and Meyer 2001, pp. 65-66).

Strategy	Objectives	Devices
Referential/nomination	Construction of in-groups and out-groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • membership categorization • biological, naturalizing and depersonalizing metaphors and metonymies • synecdoches (pars pro toto, totum pro pars)
Predication	Labelling social actors more or less positively or negatively, deprecatorily or appreciatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits • implicit and explicit predicates
Argumentation	Justification of positive or negative attributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • topoi used to justify political inclusion or exclusion, discrimination or preferential treatment

Figure 3. Discursive Strategies (Wodak and Meyer 2001, p.73)

As one of the analytical tools of discursive strategies of DHA, *topos* stands as traditional themes or concepts. Wodak (2015) defines *topoi* as “the content-related warrants... that connect the argument or arguments with the conclusion or the central claim” (as cited in Özoflu 2022, p.77). Among the commonly used *topos*, “*topos* of threat or danger” states the didactic aspect of history on societies and actors indicating which particular decisions and actions result in different consequences leading to their choices. “*Topos* of threat” show that the emphasis on possible threats arising from past actions and decisions, abstention from same action or decision and legitimization of actions which are taken for the prevention of similar threat. “*Topos* of threat” can be seen as a vital tool for emphasizing the necessity of being united against ‘the other’ (Balkan-Şahin 2020, p.66).

Analyzing political, social, and historical texts and discourses, DHA embarks to gather and compound the adequate historical, social, and political information about a particular concept. DHA’s attachment to the history stems from its critical point of view in order to achieve origins and core meanings as well as alteration of discursive practices embedded in discourses and texts (Wodak and Meyer 2001, p. 65). Wodak and Meyer (2016) considers DHA as three-dimensional approach which applies identification of specific topic and subject of a particular discourse, analyzes discursive strategies of a given text, and investigates the linguistic tools and means of the context of discourse (p. 32).

CHAPTER 2: AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM AND ITS IMPACT ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

The absence of a common ancestral past and ethnic origins has paved the way for the construction of a different type of American national identity underlining the core characteristics of the U.S. as the embodiment of distinct political, historical, and cultural values which make up someone or something 'American' or 'un-American.' The concept of American Exceptionalism which dated back to the colonial times of the Continent, offers a suitable framework for the construction of common identity for the Americans. American Exceptionalism originated from the prolonged period of religious, political, and cultural experiences of the inhabitants of the North America, and it represents a total of specific characteristics of American society. The main underlying idea is the belief that the U.S. is a 'God-chosen nation' who is destined for being an exceptional leader and outstanding example who can internalize the divine and natural rights of the men and women, defend freedom and democracy not only at home but also in the world. Therefore, it is the primary role and obligation of the U.S. to shine as an example and lead the world.

The concept of American Exceptionalism is generally analyzed within the frameworks as an "objective truth claim" and "subjective understanding of the American self" (Restad, 2015, p.17). The "objective truth claim" framework analyzes the concept of American exceptionalism with the main characteristics of the U.S., its foundation, ideology, history, type of government and foreign policy as the outcomes or products of the concept of the American Exceptionalism (Ereli, 2018, p.33). "The subjective understanding of the American self" examines the American exceptionalism as a fundamental and influential concept and the roles of ideas, beliefs on the American self-identity together with its impact over the other ideational concepts (Restad, 2015, p.17). The intersubjective ideas of American exceptionalism have also creative forces which defines the meanings of 'being an American.' One can only achieve to be an American as long as she or he adopts and believes in these very American values as an "ideological commitment" more than a kinship (Lipset, 1996, p.31).

In this thesis, American exceptionalism as subjective understanding of American self is taken as a primary source which constructs the American national identity echoed in the American system of government, domestic and foreign policy, since American

exceptionalism both as a concept and ideology creates a distinct identity as well as offers certain point of view to the Americans. Within these lenses, namely with adopting the American values and American way of life, Americans frames their core identities and identities of the others in accordance with these ideas and beliefs. That is why examining the origins and impact of the American exceptionalism seem necessary for revealing its constitutive force behind every step that the U.S. has taken. Within the social constructivism, American exceptionalism constitutes not only the American national identity but also the ideational forces behind the U.S. foreign policy. The role of ideational forces in developing national sense has an enormous influence over the state actions, threat perceptions, policies and choices which are examined in the previous chapters. In the context of the U.S. foreign policy, the main component of American identity, hereby, is analyzed with the concept of American exceptionalism which is a concept that brings various sources together and comprise the American national identity. Unlike other nations who generally have a common ethnic, cultural, and religious heritage, the United States has formed and constructed its national identity mainly relying on American exceptionalism due to the absence of an ethnic and religious past which function as a catalyst to form an identity of a nation.

American exceptionalism and American foreign policy traditions are closely related with each other. Contrary to the common opinion that the United States pursued mainly isolationist foreign policy in its early years as an independent country, this chapter advocates the argument that the United States has always pursued an internationalist foreign policy due to the construction of American self-identity over the concept of American exceptionalism which idealizes a state of being an American. As American self-identity provides decision makers and public a set of lenses that they perceive themselves as the “world’s best hope”. Therefore, it can be deduced that the United States has conducted internationalist foreign policy orientations.

On that regard, it is expected from the United States that it follows same pattern of internationalist foreign policies in its rivalry with China. Such internationalist practices of American foreign policy can be observed in the Obama Administration’s concepts of Asia Pivot and multilateralism. Deployment of American military in Australia, military, defense, economic and social agreements with the Asian states can be listed as the outcomes of Obama’s foreign policy including internationalist orientations. Moreover, defining and referring United States as a ‘Pacific power’ indicate the very American

characteristics. That is to say, the United States has always constructed its frontier and identity in accordance with its interests and aims. For instance, the United States can be a European power to protect its fellow Western allies; or it can be a watchman in the Middle East to protect its dearest ally, Israel; and now the United States has reconstructed its frontiers within the borders of Asia Pacific region to protect its interests and allies in the region again.

The internationalist foreign policy choices also appear as a valid phenomenon in Trump administration's foreign policy. Although President Trump has policies such as "Make America Great Again" and "America First" which mainly concentrate on domestic and economic issues, he has found himself in the middle of a global pandemic forcing Trump to take internationalist foreign policies.

Although twenty-first century has started to move towards a multipolar world order, the United States is still one of the most powerful countries in the world who still has responsibilities and global interests to protect. Hence, Trump has to get involved in the many regional crisis and conciliations ranging from Kosovo and Serbia, Abraham Accords in the Middle East. Even, imposing additional taxes on Chinese goods and imports by United States, Trump's call for collective action and joint response to China in the United Nations can be interpreted as the components of internationalist foreign policy.

Therefore, by taking American exceptionalism as the defining concept of American national identity, this chapter aims at examining the construction of American identity with reference to the historical development of the American exceptionalism. Since American exceptionalism is composed of various sources, the most influential origins of the concept: religious, political, and geopolitical roots of the American exceptionalism will be defined. Within the framework of American exceptionalism, the idea of superiority, leadership and missionary identity are prevalent in the U.S. foreign policy discourse in order to illustrate and reproduce the image of America as indispensable leader (Ereli, 2018, p.36). Hence in the second section of the third chapter, the impact of American exceptionalism on the U.S. foreign policy also will be drawn.

As a term and concept to define the unique characteristics of the U.S., American exceptionalism has been observed by the various scholars and influential figures

throughout centuries. A French aristocrat, Alexis de Tocqueville was the first who mentioned and observed the 'exceptional' nature of the U.S. in his *Democracy in America* published in 1835. Tocqueville observed the religious origin of the Puritan thought in America (Restad, 2017, p.26) together with the absence of an American feudal or colonial past as the exceptional characteristics of the America (Ceaser, 2012, p.7). Since the Puritan principles have an everlasting impact on the American national identity and the American concepts of "limited government", "delegated power" and "popular sovereignty" (Kessler, 1992, pp.777-779). Tocqueville is the one who referred the U.S. as exceptional and unlike other nations "the situation of the Americans is therefore entirely exceptional, and it is to be believed that no other democratic people will ever be placed in it" (de Tocqueville 2002, p.430). Yet, it was the Max Lerner who coined the term American exceptionalism in his book *America as a Civilization* in 1957 (Ceaser, 2012, p.8).

American exceptionalism is comprised of three different and important ideas as the core of the concept. First one is the idea that the United States is "distinct", since the U.S. stands as both different and the best one when it is compared to other nations. Second, the U.S as a great power and a leader cast a special and unique role in the world. Lastly, the U.S. as an exceptional power, can endure the fate of all great nations which indicates a cycle of rise and fall (Restad, 2015)

For Krebs (2015) considers that the strong American belief in the concept of American exceptionalism as a long-lasting narrative which enables the construction of arguments and narratives of the U.S. by the American leaders and policymakers in line with the American exceptionalism (pp. 13-15).

2.1.1. RELIGIOUS ORIGINS OF AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

The religious or Christian impacts and roots lie at the heart of the initial formulation of the concept of American exceptionalism. These religious origins of the American exceptionalism have mainly concentrated upon the two distinct notions which portrays the America as a "city upon a hill" and "New World or New Jerusalem". In the sixteenth century, the Protestant reformation paved way for the emergence of different religious sects and group in the Europe. Puritans were among these groups who identify themselves as the defenders of a sects aiming the purification of the Christianity. Their aim of purifying their religion directly targeted the Catholic Church of England whose

rules were not rooted in the Holy Bible for the Puritans (Song, 2015, p.243). During the 1600s, Puritans were exposed to religious pressure from the British King Charles I who was famous for his mistreatment for the dissenters at that time (Napoli, 2013, p.27). The religious and political oppression in the Europe, accelerated the influx of European immigrants to the America. Therefore, beginning from the seventeenth century, North America has become an asylum for the people who were exposed to political and religious pressure from the various regions of the Europe (Ereli, 2018, p.42). Thus, Puritans were left no choice except for leaving their homeland and sail away for establishing a new land and home for themselves. They decided to reach to the shores of the 'New Continent', 'America', in order to escape from all those malignities of the Old Continent. They left the Great Britain, went to the U.S., and established the Massachusetts Bay Colony in Boston. Puritan colonists who defined themselves as pilgrims, felt that they were in charge of a particular spiritual and political mission for establishing "a New World" (Madsen, 1998, pp.1-2). The Puritans put great faith in their God-given mission as God-favored pilgrims (Kissinger, 2015, p.6). In their search of a safe harbor for practicing their religion freely, they constructed their destination, America, as a Holy place reminding them a Biblical connotations of "Promised Land", "New Jerusalem" or "New Israel". This "New World" stands as an ideal land for the Puritans who had to escape from the Old World. By identifying themselves as "pilgrims" and America as "New Jerusalem", Puritans defended the idea that they were chosen by God to fulfill a special duty of a divine mission to spread their free spirit with drawing parallels between their "exodus" from the Europe to the America and Israelites who had to left Egypt (McLaren et al., 2009, p.69). This analogy gave Puritans a sense of being chosen and being "exceptional". Even before their landing in the shores of New World, John Winthrop, leader of Puritan colonists defined their situation as "the special destiny waiting for the saints in their journey to Massachusetts" (Madsen, 1988, p.18). Winthrop, aboard the ship Arbella which carried Puritans from Europe to the America, declared:

For we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world (as cited in Song, 2015, pp.243-244).

The image of building "a city upon a hill" is a direct reference to the Jesus Christ's Sermon on the Mountain that Jesus declared his followers: "You are the light of the

world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden” (Matthew 5:14) (as cited in Song, 2015, p.244). The religious images of American exceptionalism have been embedded in many American national symbols. For instance, the national anthem of the U.S., “the Star-Spangled Banner” which was written by the Francis Scot Key in 1814, reveals the religious imagery as the representation of strong American belief in God: “And this be our motto: In God is our Trust” (The United States National Anthem, Star Spangled Banner).

Religious origin of American exceptionalism has reinforced the fundamentals of the American sense of being exceptional and chosen. The religious origins of American exceptionalism, which contains powerful images such as having a divine mission and being likened to biblical figures, have deeply influenced both the American self-identity as well as other and the American perception of foreign policy. In this respect, American foreign policy, which was created with foreign policy preferences and discourses that prioritize both America's superiority and moral responsibilities, has reflected its religious origins throughout history. The religious origins of American exceptionalism have such a strong influence and structure that the holy image of ‘city upon a hill’ has been reflected in the speeches of several presidents from President Monroe to Bush in order to emphasize the moral and divine mission of the United States.

2.1.2. POLITICAL ORIGINS OF THE AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

As an ever-changing concept, American exceptionalism went through a drastic change in the eighteenth century with the principal political ideas of the Enlightenment and growing sentiment for the American independence. The Founding Fathers of the U.S. and other influential American leaders contributed to the secularization of the American exceptionalism as religious based concept. Therefore, the Puritan idea of being chosen and having a mission gained a political characteristic which mold the quintessence of the American national identity.

The Founding Fathers of the U.S. took “jus gentium casuistry” as a tool for legitimization of their actions, since they defended that instead of the British royal family, it was the right of the Americans to colonize and establish their own country within the borders of the North American continent (Song, 2015, p.244). In their revolt against the tyrannical and colonial British rule in their homeland, the Founding Fathers of the U.S. sought to promote peace, security, and freedom to the Americas by defending their basic rights of the decide their fates as the free members of American

society. Their noble cause impacted the values which lie at the heart of the American national identity with creating political foundations of the concept of American exceptionalism (Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776).

One of the underlying ideas of the American Revolution for the revolutionaries was to fight against the powers and outdated model of colonial government of the Old World. This revolutionary break of the America stood as an unprecedented event of the century. Therefore, a new rhetoric drawing on Biblical references, was established by the Founding Fathers in order to create a new nation, society (Song, 2015, p.244). Daniel Bell (1975) argues that “America was an exempt nation” since it freed itself from the old laws of colonial history with the American revolution (pp.204-205).

Portrayal of American revolution as a noble cause which impact the whole world can be seen from one of the famous lines of the U.S. Declaration of Independence as follows: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain Unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” (Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776). As political scientist Thomas E. Patterson asserts that “the foundations of the American national identity are composed of American beliefs and values” such as liberty, individualism, equality, self-government, checks and balances system, separation of powers, limited and representative government, constitutionalism, and private property (Patterson, 2014, pp. 8-9).

After American Revolution and declaration of American independence, political aspect of the American mission and an example for the Old World were combined with the Puritan inspired religious aspect of the American exceptionalism (Restad, 2015, p.31). The religious roots of the American exceptionalism merged into the political roots of the concept since the American nation depicted itself as a defender of “a noble cause” of both the U.S. herself and the world. Since America has a special providence, its political values had been added to her mission in order to spread the liberal American political values as well as moral ones (Ceaser, 2012, p.16).

The political attempts of the Founding Fathers in order to carve out a nation from a diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds of people, has echoed in the motto of the America as “e pluribus unum: out of many, one”. In their efforts to “form a perfect union”, the Founding Fathers of the U.S. created a distinct American identity by prioritizing American revolutionary political ideas of liberty, individualism, equality, self-government, constitutionalism, limited government, representative government,

private property due to the absence of a uniform ethnic and religious identity in the U.S. (Ereli, 2018, p.58).

One of the most famous lines of the Declaration of Independence epitomizes the essence of the American political values: “that all men are created equal” defending the core political values, namely equality and liberty as the embodiment of the American national identity (Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776). Adding these political foundations of the concept of American exceptionalism based on the Enlightenment ideas, the Founding Fathers also forged these characteristics with universal connotations (Restad, 2012, p.60). The Founding Fathers of the America established an American national identity over the concept of exceptionalism adding the universal political values inspired from the Enlightenment. The War of 1812 was functioned as the means of consolidation and reinforcement for the process of development of the American national identity by spreading a sense of unity of a nation (Restad, 2015, p.33). Greene (1993) argues that thanks to the role and impact of the American revolution, America has become as social and political model together with the idea of American superiority over the Old World (p.207).

Thus, the political origin of the American exceptionalism can be epitomized by the John Jay’s words that Americans were exceptional nation since they were the first nation who could choose their form of government and favored with special providence. Moreover, Benjamin Franklin clearly asserted that the “Special providence was the America herself as a reference and honor to the American struggle for dignity and happiness of the humanity” (Weinberg, 1963, p.17)

Although it took its initial origins from a Christian and divine source and point of view, after adopting the ‘very’ American principles stemming from American Revolution, Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the U.S., American exceptionalism has reached its self-actualization. Due to the multinational nature and structure of the United States, the religious origins of American exceptionalism within the framework of Biblical references have become secular with the impact and articulation of American political values which has stemmed from the unique experiences of American society over time. Thanks to political origins of the American exceptionalism, the term has gained more common ground.

Although the common belief towards the concept of ‘Special Providence’ still retains its influence on the American public opinion, political values has revealed its ability to become a main feature that makes America “America”. Joseph Nye (2023) asserts that

among the other components as the different origins of the American exceptionalism, the political origins of the concept of American exceptionalism, has remained dominant one due to the fact that these political values has served to carve out a distinct American political identity.

2.1.3. GEOPOLITICAL ORIGINS OF THE AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

American sense of being exceptional has also influenced by its geographical advantages which makes the U.S. enjoy a safe environment together with its vast and fertile lands. That is why the geopolitical position of the U.S. has an enormous impact over the American identity.

Thanks to the secure and calm atmosphere of the American continent, the U.S. was able to ensure and protect its boundaries and its unique political system from the interferences in the first years of its establishment. Then, the U.S. took its advantageous geopolitical position and decided to seek to expand their ideas as well as its boundaries. Within this context, the Monroe Doctrine and the Manifest Destiny are two important concepts which stem from the geopolitical origins of the American Exceptionalism which influences both the American exceptionalism itself and the U.S. foreign policy. The vast, empty, and abundant land of America stands as a metaphor for Tabula Rasa which is open for the activities of free American people as their homeland freed from the European intervention (Baritz, 1964, p. viii-ix).

Undiscovered and untouched nature and geography of the America impacted the American self-identity and their ideas about the economy, politics, and their government (Ereli, 2018, p.11). Davis and Lynn-Jones (1987) argues that the unique history of the U.S. has molded by its distinct geographic position and natural resources (p.23). The Founding Fathers took the geographical position of America as an advantage which enables them to distance themselves from the entanglements of the Old World (Song, 2015, p.245).

Aaron David Miller (2013) refers the advantageous geographical position of the U.S. as “free security” since the U.S. has enjoyed the long-lasting sense of peace and security for almost two hundred and fifty years thanks to its geographical position in the middle of two vast oceans. Thanks to its geographical position and two neutral neighbors, Canada and Mexico, the U.S. has enjoyed the advantages of its geopolitical uniqueness. Miller (2013) also takes the American unique geographical location as the source of “central organizing principles” behind the American foreign policy. Since,

geopolitical stance of the U.S. has given it a credit to become a regional hegemon in the North America at first, then in the whole American continent (Ereli, 2018, p.52).

Stanley Hoffman (1968) in his *Gulliver's Troubles* touched on the image of separation in the American mind as both physical and moral one. For Hoffmann, America has inherited a sense of separation which distances America itself from the Old World, Europe in terms of geography and ethics (pp.94-95).

Likewise, Jefferson believed that distinct geographical characteristics of the U.S. in a sense demand a totally different kind of natural law regarding the rules and orders of the New versus Old World. This peculiar natural law, a direct outcome of geographical distance of the U.S., needs brand new policies for the U.S. in its relations with other nations, instead of old established European policies (Weinberg, 1935, p.8).

The geographical and geopolitical distance of America from the Europe has contributed the concepts of "free security" and "free land" which indicate "the innocence of America as a nation in the wicked world". Since the U.S. stands as both an exceptional and naïve nation who can act freely by its unique nature unlike other nations who have to struggle for obtain these abilities and characteristics (Vann Woodward, 1960, p.7).

The fundamental argument of geopolitical exceptionalism of the United States has originated from the idea that the United States was out of the hustle and bustle of the European politics thanks to its geographical peculiarities as shielded by oceans and surrounded by two weak neighbors (Ruggie, 1997, p.89).

Nye (2023) argues that America's "sheer size" and its distinct geography located in the middle of two vast oceans, have contributed to geopolitical advantages of the U.S. Tocqueville also affirmed that the peculiar geographical location of the U.S. contributes to the America's position as exceptional.

For Nye (2023), the geographical position of the U.S. surrounded by two oceans and two mild neighbors who are weaker than the U.S. function as advantage for the U.S. to pursue its goals in order to expand US territories in the nineteenth century while it enjoyed its status of non-interventionism towards the European power struggles.

The Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny can be described as the policies and concepts which are direct outcomes of the geographical aspects of the America. The Monroe Doctrine stands as the proclamation of the warning from the U.S. directly to the European powers not to intervene 'Americas' and not to resume establishing European colonies in the Americas (Saito, 2013, p.126). However, the Monroe Doctrine did not only reflect the American policy of non-interventionism and isolationism

especially from the Old Continent. The Doctrine also referred the American intention to expand its territories in Westward direction which echoed in American identity (McEvoy-levy, 2001, p.25). More than a declaration of isolationist policy, the Monroe Doctrine stands as a declaration of “hemispheric dominance” in order to define the U.S. as hegemon of the Americas. Thanks to the doctrine, the U.S. expanded its territories in the Western Hemisphere of the North America. With the acquisition of Florida, the U.S. not only ensure its access to the Pacific but also it was able to dramatically cut the European interferences in the continent (Restad, 2015, p.76).

The geographical and geopolitical origins of the American exceptionalism as missionary identity can be traced into the concept of “Manifest Destiny” which was coined by the John O’Sullivan in 1845 with reference to the annexation of Texas (O’Sullivan, 1845). Manifest Destiny portrays the American mentality and opinion on the New World which indicates the American continent beyond the current borders of the U.S. within the religious concept of America as “chosen land”. Moreover, Manifest Destiny was used as a framework for the U.S. policy of continental expansion in the nineteenth century. Rather than signaling a new period in the history of the U.S., Manifest Destiny is a product of the concept of American exceptionalism as the main framework of American national identity (Restad, 2015, pp.38-39).

It is obvious that unique geographical location of the U.S. holds such characteristic which will strengthen the exceptional character of America. Thanks to its geography, the U.S. has enjoyed its status as secure and remote country far away from the conflicts of the Old World. At the same time, the U.S. has maintained the domestic production keep alive together with strengthening its economic and commercial relations. Hence, all of these have paved a way for carving out an invincible and powerful symbol of American identity within the framework of American exceptionalism. Moreover, this perception led to the emergence of two important cardinal political phenomena, such as the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny both which has a long-lasting impact on the U.S. foreign policy.

2.2.1. THE IMPACT OF AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Identity is a dynamic concept which is useful to analyze a specific country’s foreign policy. Since it sheds light on the changing concepts and motives of a foreign policy. As Anthony Smith (2003) defines that national identity is essentially a concept of

preservation and continuous re-interpretation of the pattern of national values, symbols, myths, memories, and traditions which give shape the particular national heritage of a nation together with identification of individual members of that nation with that particular national heritage, values and the pattern (as cited in Restad, 2015, p.14). Likewise, American identity has also evolved through centuries, however American exceptionalism has always been a lasting concept at the heart of American identity.

Generally being taken as a linchpin of American national identity, American exceptionalism also functions as the United States of America's "master narrative" whose impact can be seen almost every aspect of the American way of life, politics, and foreign policy (Restad, 2019, p.69). American exceptionalism as a concept which functions as a founding and constitutive impact on the American national identity, also determines the way United States conducts its foreign policies. As a main component of the American identity, American exceptionalism has also great impact over the American perception of the world. One can find the traces of the soul of American identity especially on the definitions of rivals, partners, allies, and threat perceptions (Hook and Spanier, 2009, p.5). That is to say, it has played decisive role in foreign policy choices and orientation of the United States foreign policy. With the attribution of idealized characteristics to the U.S. and the strong sense of commitment to the American values of freedom and democracy under the umbrella of American exceptionalism enables the U.S. to construct and employ the dichotomies of democratic states alike itself who are prone to support freedom, peace and stability versus undemocratic states who are described with the warlike and evil characteristics (Hook and Spanier, 2009, p.9). Therefore, in the last part of the third chapter, the interrelation between the American Exceptionalism and American foreign policy will be discussed with references to the exemplary and missionary identities and American foreign policy choices which reveal the very internationalist nature of the U.S. foreign policy.

In this regard, the impact of American exceptionalism on the American foreign policy has been examined within traditional/classical literature. In terms of isolationism and interventionism both which has taken their roots from the missionary and exemplary concepts derived from the American exceptionalism. Various scholars have defined the classical foreign policy motion or orientation of American foreign policy between

isolationism and interventionism with the image of “pendulum”. Since U.S. foreign policy has constantly swung like a pendulum between isolationism and interventionism in line with identity dichotomies embedded in American exceptionalism, that is to say, missionary and exemplary identities of the United States (Restad, 2012, p.56).

Researchers who critically examine American foreign policy from the onset of the U.S., assert that the U.S. has adopted an internationalist foreign policy by its nature. As the republic was declared thanks to the French support and American French alliance against the Great Britain. For this critical American foreign policy scholars, from the onset of the U.S. has managed its foreign relations within the framework of commercial and political cooperations as well as alliances in order to ensure its security aiming at protecting the newly independent state from a possible foreign invasion and protect its trade. The main point for the critical American foreign policy scholars is that historically the U.S. has conducted neither isolationist nor interventionist foreign policy especially in its first years. As Restad (2015) contends that American foreign policy has always pursued an internationalist orientation (p.10).

Therefore, scholars argue that American foreign policy has built upon two different sources as missionary and exemplary identities stemming from the foundational and influential concept of American exceptionalism over the American national identity. This argument means that either the U.S. sees itself as an exemplar nation for the world who abstains from the engagement of the Old World’s vicious affairs that give harm to the U.S., or the U.S. perceives itself as an example for the world having a divine and political mission to spread its ideals, democracy and liberal-capitalist ideology for the betterment of the world (Restad, 2012, p.56).

The nature of binary oppositions of the American exceptionalism and American national identity basically pave the way for the creation of two prevalent foreign policy tradition of the United States: isolationism referring to the American aloofness, and interventionism or internationalism (Restad, 2015, p.7).

Some scholars who examined the American foreign policy in a classical way, such as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and Stanley Hoffman have used the pendulum image in order to describe the cyclical nature of the U.S. foreign policy traditions. The pendulum image signifies that American foreign policy shuttles between isolationist and interventionist

foreign policy in line with the impact of missionary or exemplary exceptionalisms as the dominant identity (Restad 2015, p.8).

Exemplary identity has taken as an identity originated from the religious origins of American exceptionalism citing the oft-quoted speech of “City upon a hill” by John Winthrop; whereas missionary identity has been accepted as a concept stemming from the political origins of the American exceptionalism which aims at spreading democracy in order to make the world safer and appropriate for the American ideals and leadership (Restad, 2015, p.7).

In accordance with the classical analysis of American foreign policy traditions, American foreign policy history is divided between the terms which reflect isolationist or interventionist foreign policies. In the American context, as two leading and recurrent policies towards the international relations, both isolationism, and interventionism take their sources from the “unilateralist impulse, a sense of moral pragmatism and legalism” which establish a political base for the American way of foreign policy (Hastedt, 2004, pp.257-258).

Isolationist foreign policy tradition is thought to be rested upon the missionary strand of American exceptionalism, basically means that the U.S. has sought to refrain from the intervening the world affairs. Glenn Hastedt (2004) argues that the term isolationism is generally taken as a concept of total alienation from the world affairs which is not an appropriate definition and usage for the meaning of isolationism within the American political context. Hastedt (2004) defends that the American foreign policy of isolationism offers a broader concept which includes the continuation of the commercial relations all over the world in order to ensure economic and political interests and development at home, as well as provide American security and promote a peaceful international environment (p. 258).

Exemplarist motivation behind the isolationist American foreign policy highlights the idea that the United States signifies “the New World” which is a totally different, superior, and new homeland than the turbulent and conflictual atmosphere and nature of the “Old World”, the Europe. For the advocators of isolationist foreign policy, the only way of maintaining the superiority of New World vis a vis Old Continent is to stay away from old European conflicts, alliances, and entanglements. It is suggested that exemplarist inspired isolationist American foreign policy favored by the President George Washington’s Farewell Address which Washington urges the United States to

abstain from the “permanent alliances” and intervening the domestic issues of other states, especially European ones. (Restad, 2012, p.63).

As one of the outstanding documents of the American political history, George Washington’s Farewell Address is regarded as the first example of an initial representation of the isolationist American foreign policy. Since Washington urged and advised Americans for staying away from the “steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world”. By specifically emphasizing Europe, Washington also implied that the United States and Europe have totally different worlds and visions and “Europe has a set of primary interest which are not our concern” (Hastedt, 2004, pp.257-258).

Besides, as one of the American substantial political philosopher Thomas Paine also contended the isolationist foreign policy for the United States. Since Paine argued that there no need and advantage of the American alliance or any connection with the Great Britain and enmity between the United States and France as well as Spain (Hastedt, 2004, pp. 257-258).

Moreover, Monroe Doctrine stands as an example of isolationist American foreign policy since the doctrine basically declared that the United States did not have an intention to intervene in European politics, and the U.S. looked forward to the same attitude from the European powers. However, in case of a European attempt to intervene the United States, or Americas, the United States took it as an aggressive and hostile step towards America’s territorial integrity and sovereignty (Hastedt, 2004, pp.257-258).

From its onset, the U.S. has confessed its strong belief in the special role, mission and obligation of America who is destined for rising as an example of freedom, justice and democracy by leading the world towards a direction of the New World (Hook and Spanier, 2009, p.10). This sense of being chosen stands as a prevalent and recurrent theme in the American national identity in the form or concept of American Exceptionalism. Moreover, this theme can be observed from the U.S. Constitution to the Monroe Doctrine. The belief in a ‘special providence’ is the creature force behind the American national identity which impacts the foreign policy actions and decisions of the U.S.

The main missionary motivation behind the interventionist American foreign policy stems from the American exceptionalism's underlying idea of America's special and divine mission and role to become leader and promoter of the free and democratic world by spreading its liberal and American values as well as capitalism. Just as the word "mission" suggests that it is the mission of the United States which can be interpreted as religious or political one, yet for both the founding fathers and American people, the United States is destined for fulfill its unique mission to spread its core democratic values to the world. Therefore, American leadership and its guidance is a must for the more peaceful world. From the Spanish-American War of 1898 to the Iraq War in 2003, the examples of interventionist foreign policy orientations can be seen in different periods of American history. The missionary identity of American exceptionalism has echoed in the several concepts such as "manifest destiny", "imperialism", "internationalism", "the U.S. as a leader of free world", "modernization theory" and "new world order" (McCrisken, 2002, p.63).

By portraying American mission as a noble cause, the U.S. enables itself to defend its territorial expansion firstly in the South America, then in the world as a great power after the twentieth century in the name of freedom and democracy. Since the missionary identity gives the U.S. an insight that the interests of the U.S. and the world is equivalent (Hook and Spanier, 2009, p.11). Moreover, as McCrisken (2003) puts it, the very American belief arises from the missionary strand of American exceptionalism, whether the others realize it or not, all people in the world has a desire to become an American (p.11).

Critical U.S. foreign policy analysts put forward the contradictory results and comments of the traditional U.S. foreign policy analysts who defend that the U.S. pursued the isolationist foreign policy from the beginning of the republic citing the examples of Washington's Farewell Address, Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny. Hilde Restad (2015) and many other critical U.S. foreign policy scholars defined the classical analysis as 'old paradigm', and instead of the classical claim of isolationist foreign policy in the early stage of the U.S., they have emphasized that from the very beginning of the U.S., the America has always been adopted unilateral internationalism. The main point of criticism towards the classical analysis of U.S. foreign policy arises from their hypothesis that although the U.S. pursued a policy in the nineteenth century continental expansion in order to enlarge its territories in the whole Americas,

traditional USFP scholars acknowledge that the U.S. pursued 'isolationist' foreign policy (McDougall, 1997, p.7).

Adler (1957) states that the period of "so-called isolationist period" in a sense accelerated the period and efforts of continental expansion. Since, in the American context, the American action of expanding its territories in the Americas basically aimed at terminating the European, namely the Spanish and British colonization, expansion, and influence in the Americas. Yet, these goals eventually paved way for the American continental expansion (p.20). The U.S. have utilized the term isolationism as a shield against the European great power struggles. Yet, it did not cause America's total aloofness from the world. Rather, it enabled the U.S. having achieved a regional hegemony at first in the Americas, then global hegemony in the world (Ereli, 2018, p.65). Hence, the American implementation of isolationist foreign policy towards Europe in order to demolish the further and potential impact over the Americas, lead up to the American continental expansion. By the year 1824, the U.S. acquired Florida, reached the Pacific, and managed to break the European influence in the continent (Weeks, 1992, p.5).

Herein, it can be grasped that in general terms isolationism in the American context basically means the America's isolation from the Europe. Therefore, the concept of 'Manifest Destiny' and continental expansion in the nineteenth century stand as a natural outcome of this very American rationale and destiny of the U.S. As it was stated by the John O'Sullivan on December 27, 1845, that continental expansion is "the right of America's manifest destiny". In other words, it can be revealed from the continental expansion that the U.S. embraced the Americas as its domestic realm (Restad, 2015, p.65). That is to say, the U.S. foreign policy does include only "Atlantic relations" from which the U.S. tried to distance itself. This means that from the onset of the republic, the U.S. perceived and accepted the whole continent as its "natural site for territorial expansion". For Restad (2015) this also has displayed the international foreign policy impulse of the U.S. from the beginning. Restad (2015) implies that contrary to the traditional opinion that the U.S. adopted isolationist foreign policy at first, then interventionism, the policy of continental expansion together with the American consideration of the whole continent within the context of American interest have put forth that the founding idea and main goal behind the U.S. was achievement of the great power status or building an American empire (p.66).

Even though the Founding Fathers' so-called isolationist policy is considered as isolationism from the Europe by the traditional U.S. foreign policy approach, the American involvement in South America and its continental expansion actually reveal that the interlocutors of the U.S. in the South America were the Europeans, namely Spanish and British. In fact, in the nineteenth century, the U.S. maintained its relations with the European colonial powers by intervening and acquiring new territories in the South America. It would be better to not only cover and examine the early phase of American foreign policy cannot be analyzed under the policy of isolationism (Restad 2015, p.79).

In this sense, critical U.S. foreign policy scholars argue that Founding Fathers of the U.S. were not totally isolationists. Instead of isolated America from the whole world, they preferred to isolate and protect the newborn republic which was a former colony, from its previous colonizers and masters, Europeans, especially British, in order to prevent a foreign influence, invasion or colonization in the Americas. Therefore, Founding Fathers cannot be entitled as 'isolationists'. Moreover, the oft quoted example of isolationist American foreign policy document, Washington's Farewell Address is in fact not a manifestation of isolationism. As Restad (2015) asserts that, it is rather a presidential speech which reflects the impact of foreign relations on the newly founded state and the political debates between the pro-British Federalists and pro-French Democratic Republicans (Restad, 2015, p.69).

In a similar vein, Monroe Doctrine also can be regarded as one of the historic declarations of isolationism which limited the term isolationism only applicable to the European problems and issues. In this context, within the framework of Monroe Doctrine, the U.S. handled its relations with Europeans in the context of isolationism. However, at the same time, it also declared the right of the U.S. to involve and intervene in South America together with its hemispheric dominance aiming continental expansion in Americas (Restad, 2015, p.76). It is worthy to mentioned that as it was discussed before, the driving force behind the Manifest Destiny and American continental expansion was the American exceptionalism undoubtedly. Since the U.S. has unique motives and a special "mission" which is "not tainted with evil or self-serving motives" (Nugent, *Habits of Empire*, p.xiv).

Robert Tucker and David Hendrickson (1990) contends that Founding Fathers were aware of their role and mission as the architects and executives of future great empire

(p.viii). Therefore, rather than isolationists, the Founding Fathers of the U.S. were the decision makers who made up with the idea and image of “American Empire” and followed policies in accordance with their universal targets.

The ambition and goal of the Founding Fathers can be comprehended in their selection of the images of Roman Empire together with the Latin phrases which are embedded in the state symbols of the U.S. Thus, these adoption and application of Roman figures and Latin phrases indicate their ‘noble cause’ and goals. These images and lofty expressions for the United States, its role and mission reveal the internationalist rationale behind the foundation of the U.S. The inspiration and image of Roman Empire can be traced in the American symbols from the Latin phrases of “E pluribus unum” meaning out of many one, “Novus ordo seclorum” meaning new order of the ages” and “Annuit coeptis” meaning providence in favor of the American cause (Annuit Coeptis). These particular images together with the type and structure of the American government has proved the great cause behind the policies and intentions of the Founding Fathers and their aim to promote “Pax Americana” from the beginning.

Moreover, just like the Romans, American public and high officials have never considered themselves as invaders or colonizers. Since for them, they have a special and lofty mission given by God and their main obligation is to realize it. This special mission does not only envisage America’s favor but also for the sake of humanity. That is why America was usually mentioned and idealized as “the glory and astonishment of the whole earth” (as cited in Greene, 1993, p.164) and as “world’s best hope” (Weinberg, 1935, pp.38-40). Thus, in this regard, the early phase of American foreign policy cannot be analyzed under the policy of isolationism (Restad 2015, p.79).

Therefore, from the early phase of the republic, Founding Fathers aimed at a future American republic, and they figured out their visions for this aim. The exceptionalist and expansionist impulse inherited in the American vision and American identity to become an empire. That is the one of the main reasons for the constant American self-representation as “indispensable nation”.

That is to say, as Hilde Restad (2015) claims that the Founding Fathers actually adopted not isolationist foreign policy, rather the policy of “unilateral maneuverability” (p.80). Franco American alliance which led to the American declaration of independence stands as a better illustration for the unilateral maneuverability. U.S.

declaration of independence was directly influenced and realized by the Franco-American alliance against the British. Madison said that “the U.S. owes perhaps its liberty” to their alliance with France that was a direct outcome of French-British rivalry (Onuf and Onuf, 1993, p.117). Except for the formal alliance between the U.S. and France, the U.S. did not enter any formal alliance with European powers, it only engaged economic and trade relations which summarizes the American “unilateral maneuverability” (Restad, 2015, p.80). For Erel (2018) internationalist American foreign policy offers a great chance of “maneuverability” to the U.S. in order to prevent the American homeland from a possible threat from great powers at that time by ensuring its freedom of action (p.63).

McCrisken (2003) contends that the nineteenth century American foreign relations were mainly characterized by the Spanish American War, American Mexican War and Continental expansion. All these have signified in fact “the dominance of missionary strand of American exceptionalism on U.S. foreign policy” (McCrisken, 2003, p.68). The exceptionalist and expansionist identity which have played a decisive role in the establishment of the U.S., in a way have eliminated the isolationist tendencies as a concept traditional U.S. foreign policy analysis. Since no one would have expected an isolationist foreign policy from a nation whose founding was based on exceptional mind and identity.

Having built a merchant fleet immediately after its declaration of American independence, its engagement with global trade and economy from the onset of the establishment of the republic, Franco American temporary alliance for the American independence and alliance with French in order to solving the Continental problems together with missionary activities all over the world have indicated and proved that from the birth of the U.S., it did not pursue isolationist foreign policy (Erel, 2018, p.65). Herein, early U.S. foreign policy can be properly described as the “realization of America’s international interests unilaterally without making long term commitments or joining formal alliances (Jonas, 2002, p.339).

Stanley Hoffmann states that almost every state has their own version of exceptionalisms. However, American and French exceptionalisms have come to the fore since they both defend that their exceptionalisms have universal characteristics and causes which embrace all humanity. Yet, French exceptionalisms has its primary impact in the European context. On the other hand, American exceptionalism seems

to realize its universalistic claims and ambitions by influencing the world (Nye, Joseph, 2023).

Therefore, American identity which is originated from the American exceptionalism is clearly seen in both the internal and external relations and dynamics of the U.S. Locating the American self-identity at the center, American exceptionalism along with material assessments, is instrumental in defining the interests of the U.S. as well as its threat perception and its relations with allies.

In the context of this chapter, due to the absence of a kinship and common ethnic identity, the construction of American has been associated with the concept of American exceptionalism with its the formation and origins. Therefore, this chapter has examined and interpreted the process of America's construction of self-identity and its impact on the U.S. foreign policy.

CHAPTER 3: CONSTRUCTING CHINA AS “OTHER”: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Within the framework of American exceptionalism, United States has formed its identity in an idealized way, whereas in the same vein, it has constructed and characterized its rivalries by attributing negative qualities. These contrast identifications and constructions have generally formed in line with the material capabilities and ideational factors of the subject that the U.S. faces with. By defining its rivals with negative attributions, the U.S. has also consolidated American self-identity as missionary and exceptional. As the last member of the nations who has been subjected to the American construction as other, China has been accepted as the current and perhaps the most dreadful adversary of the U.S. in the twenty-first century. Once having been a regional then a global power, China has attracted American attention with its intensive reforms particularly on economic development which have turned China into a world's factory. Actually, the U.S. has envisaged that with the American Chinese rapprochement started in 1970s, China would have adopted a path of development that the India who chose to develop and rise as American partner and regional power under the shadow of the U.S. Moreover, the U.S. has also expected that integrating China to the capitalist economy would eventually lead to China's political integration to the liberal democracy by rejecting its state ideology, communism. Yet, China has frustrated the American expectations. It has pursued its economic development by becoming the factory of the world and rising as a challenger against the American hegemony and world order which was built by the U.S. after the Second World War. Thus, twenty-first century has witnessed an American construction of China as an ideological rival who has a growing economic, military, and political power with a huge demography. However, examining the historical examples of American construction of rival others, it can be inferred that China occupies a distinct place among the others. Since the source of the construction of Chinese other identity dated back to the nineteenth century Chinese immigrant workers who were seen as a threat for the U.S., too. Having started as a domestic social construction, Chinese identity has gained universal characteristics. In this respect, the third chapter of this thesis aims at examining the American perception of Chinese identity throughout the history. It includes the domestic sphere of American Chinese relations due to the fact that the initial representations and Chinese identities in the United States has started with the

arrival of Chinese immigrant workers who came to the U.S. in order to work in the miserable conditions of the mines and other fields especially in the California at the beginning. Moreover, this chapter will point the changing nature of Chinese identity in the eyes of Americans regarding the role of China. Therefore, this chapter includes Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, China and American alliance in the First and Second World Wars, establishment of the People's Republic of China, Chinese American rapprochement, Chinese reformations, rise of China and the impact of Covid-19 global pandemic on the American perception of contemporary Chinese identity.

3.1. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA AS THREAT FROM 1800 TO SECOND WORLD WAR

Oliver Turner (2014) has pointed out that the construction of Chinese identity has remained firm in the American minds as a result of American Chinese encounters in history together with the American self-image (p.6). Moreover, American construction of Chinese identity and images related to this identity have multifunctional role regarding the consolidation of American identity vis a vis Chinese identity and legitimization and justification of American foreign policy towards China (Turner, 2014, p.7).

Although nineteenth century is regarded as the starting point of the American Chinese relations, the commercial and cultural relations between two massive and important countries have started in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In 1784, with the sail of clipper ship, Empress of China from New York to Guangzhou, China initiated the commercial relations between America and China which paved the way for America's position as one of the biggest trade partners of China and the Asia region. After a couple of years of the initiation of economic relations between two countries, the U.S. has started to increase its religious and cultural activities in China through the missionaries. The growing bilateral relations between America and China has enabled the U.S. who became one of the influential Asia-Pacific nations and initiated influx of Chinese immigrants to the United States (Shambaugh, 2013, p.11). After the Empress of China's journey from New York to China, it was reported that until 1800, more than five US ships per year operated between the Chinese and American ports which were used in order to carry goods, transport merchants and missionaries (Hao, 1986, p.13).

American society started to encounter Chinese people, especially immigrant workers after the 1850s. From 1848 to 1850, the California Gold Rush accelerated the influx of immigrant workers mostly from China (Holliday, 2002, pp.ix-x). approximately 100,000 Chinese workers and families reached the United States between 1849 and 1870 (Daniels, 1988, p.9).

Due to the instability and poverty in China, Chinese people started to rush to the United States in order to get a job and work. However, the huge influx of the immigrant workers from China had dual impact over the American society. The investors and capital owners were pleased to cheap Chinese labor. Yet, the increasing number of Chinese workers who had to work and live under miserable conditions especially in the mining sector, also sparked various concerns and racist accusations by the American public. Chinese workers were exposed to several accusations. They were accused of being a “Yellow Peril” indicating their unassimilable nature and culture of Chinese people and destabilization impact of Chinese people on the American society (Turner, 2014, p.51). The identification of Chinese people took its origins from both race indicating yellow race, and class distinctions pointing the Chinese workers as backward. Chinese style working was also identified as “machine-like” (Kil, 2012, p.665). The Chinese tradition and habit of hardworking actually were the most important reasons of their employment in the mines, road and highway construction sectors.

As the tension heightened in the American public about the situation and growing numbers of the Chinese workers in the California, in 1876, California State Senate declared that “Chinese were not able to adapt themselves into the American society and its habits properly”. Even in the California Workingmen’s Party Chinese were faced the popular slogan of “Chinese must go!” (as cited in Turner, 2014, p.55).



Figure 4. Yellow Terror in all his glory (Turner, 2014, p.76) is an 1899 cartoon depicting a Chinese man during the Boxer Rebellion in China which was initiated by the Chinese in order to put an end to partition of China among major powers and expel foreigners from China. Illustration portrays rebellious Chinese as “yellow peril” which is a traditional racist phrase indicating the inferiority of Asians and dangers stemming from Chinese resistance. Chinese man is drawn as armed with a gun, a knife, and a torch, while a white foreign woman lying on the ground is deadly injured by this violent Chinese man.

Therefore, after a quite short period of time that these Chinese immigrant’s arrival in the United States, mostly in California, they had to face with some new legislations regarding their situation in the U.S. Starting from 1852, new laws was introduced in order to handle the Chinese issue in the U.S. This stage was initiated with the Foreign Minister’s License Tax that actually aimed to target foreign workers in the mining sector of California. However, a great majority of the foreign workers in the California mining sector were Chinese workers (Turner, 2014, p.51).



Figure 5. Chinese Question” by Thomas Nast for Harper’s Weekly. Feb. 2, 1871 (“THE CHINESE QUESTION” 1871) *The woman standing in front of the Chinese man is the female figure of Statue of Liberty as one of the national symbols of the United States. This woman figure is trying to protect poor Chinese man from the angry mob who want to expel all Chinese from America. From the posters on the wall right behind the Chinese man, it can be seen that Chinese in the United States are depicted as “lowest”, “barbarian”, “immoral”, “idolater”, “vile”, “vicious” and “heathenish”. It is quite worthy to note that the adjective of “rat-eater” may remind the same labelling and accusations towards the Chinese and Asians during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

At the end, sui generis code, the Chinese Exclusion Act was introduced and entered into force on 23 March 1882. For Erika Lee (2019) the Chinese Exclusion Act was the first law which intended to control immigration to the U.S., actually was the first document which legalized “xenophobia”. Moreover, the Chinese Exclusion act did not only point a special foreign community but also it paved the way of creating a model for sets of principles regarding the global regulation of immigrants (p.86). Under the Chinese Exclusion Act, Chinese immigrant lost their right of American citizenship. Since 1790, “only free white people” were able to get the chance of being an American citizen after two years in the U.S. (Turner, 2013, p.910). Before the Chinese Exclusion Act, no other group were excluded from naturalized citizenship based on race and nation officially (Lee, 2019, p.101).

Chinese immigrants were also marginalized by the construction of threat perception in the American society. Since they were seen as the source of numerous infectious diseases at that time. Even their existence posed a danger and threat for the stability of American society. Campbell contends that this pattern can be seen in the threatened societies who regard newcomers as the embodiment of potential danger for their own society (Campbell, 1992, p.75).

Accordingly, Chinese were exposed to blames such as the reason of the spread of smallpox and leprosy. Even the Washington Post at that time portrayed the arrival of the massive influx of Chinese immigrants to the U.S. as “deadly plague” (Molina, 2006, p.26).

Another reason of accusations targeting the Chinese people was that they were the main reason of the American unemployment. Besides, for many Americans, they were the leading criminals in the country who filled the prisons and asylums of the U.S. (Lee, 2019, p.82). Kil (2012) points out that in the 1882, the year of Chinese Exclusion Act, Chinese were references negatively as direct threat for the “white labor and employment”. The recurrent images and stereotypical identifications of Chinese were employed certain adjectives such as “coolie slave”, “cruel murderer”, “evil heathen”, “celestial invaders”, “uncivilized unassimilator”, “overwhelming deluge” and “diseased filth” (Kil, 2012, p.667).

The Chinese Exclusion Act also offered a chance to the American authorities to choose and determine the qualifications of immigrants. Chinese were categorized the immigrants in accordance with their professions. For instance, workers were banned for 10 years, whereas certain professionals and elite groups were free from the exclusion (Lee, 2019, p.101).

The Scott Act in 1888 entered into force in order to reconfirm the Chinese exclusion from the immigration to the U.S. In 1892, with the passage of Geary Act, these laws on exclusions were extended for ten years. The Chinese Exclusion Act was reinvigorated in 1902 and became a permanent act in 1904 (Lee, 2019, p.119).

The negative and pejorative imagery and identification of Chinese in the nineteenth century in the U.S., gave its seat to a new identification with the First and Second World War. Although Chinese troops did not directly participate the battle, due to the American Chinese alliance during the First World War, the image of threatening China and Chinese eased down. Since the U.S. and its allies had to face a new and hot threats more than civil, passive and domestic China threat (Turner, 2014, p.71).

Especially during the 'Red Decade', 1930s, Chinese felt the quite calm and positive stance. Since at that time, the United States was busy with concerning the growing danger posed by the Japan (Turner, 2014, p.73). Thus, the identities and political imageries were reversed in the Second World War, and Japan started to be portrayed as a "vital threat" for the U.S. and its security, not the Chinese (Turner, 2014, p.76).

Although Second World War remained as a catastrophic period for the many people in the world, Chinese people described their pathetic bliss since their representations were changed immediately after the Second World War. For instance, Charlie Seong said that "Second World War was the most important historical event of our times", and Harold Liu commented that "for the first time in 1940s, the Chinese in the U.S. were accepted as friends and alliance by the Americans" (as cited in Turner, 2014, p.82). On the Chinese side, they started to feel integrated to a noble cause in order to defend their country, the U.S., although they were not seen as equal citizens at that time. Approximately 4,000 Chinese Americans were volunteers and enrolled in U.S. Army from New York and New Jersey (Song, p.392).

After the Japan and German signature of the Tripartite Pact in September 1940, China and Chinese Americans felt lucky to provide advantage from the identification of the new camps and alliances during the Second World War. Thanks to the displacement of Japan as a new threat for the U.S., China received four loans from the America approximately 120 million dollars between 1937 and 1941 (Turner, 2014, p.81). As the positive relations grew, China could also obtain funds and humanitarian aids from the United China Relief (UCR) and the Rockefeller Foundation. During the Second World War, American sympathy towards China and Chinese as their allies grew up dramatically. In 1942 survey pointed out that American public started to reckon that Chinese were "hardworking", "honest", "brave", "religious", "intelligent" and "practical" (Turner, 2014, p.82).

As many scholars indicated that the main reason behind the United States' abolishment of Chinese Exclusion Act during the Second World War was to struggle against the Japanese war propaganda. It is quite clear that by repealing the Chinese Exclusion Act, the U.S. wanted to guarantee in order to maintain its alliance with China during the Second World War (Song, p.34). Hence, once again, the U.S. has determined its ally and rival interchangeably in accordance with its interests and profits. Although the abolishment of the Chinese Exclusion Act enabled Chinese to obtain American citizenship, in line with the 1924 Immigration Act Chinese faced with some

restrictions on their right to get citizenship. For Oliver Turner (2014), this was a direct representation of the American opinion that Western partners still comes first, Chinese stands as secondary ally of the U.S. in the eastern front during the Second World War (p.85).

After the Second World War, in April 1946, when Japanese threat was over for the U.S., a civil war in China blazed out between the Nationalists and Communists (Turner, 2014, pp.85-86). Hence, a brand-new ideological threat in the Asia for the United States drew close: a communist China.

3.2. THE CONSTRUCTION OF 'RED CHINA' FROM 1949 TO THE 20TH CENTURY

After the long year of clashes in the civil war which lasted more than twenty years, Communists led by the Mao Zedong won the war and Chairman Mao announced the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. After the establishment of a new communist state in China, one of the principal nations in the Asia and important American trade partner, the U.S. decided to not recognize the People's Republic of China. Instead, the U.S. decided to preserve its diplomatic relations with the Republic of China under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan (Turner, 2014, p.95).

Although the relations and tensions between the U.S. and China remained firms at the beginning, it changed after the two leading communist states, China and Soviet Union started to come closer to each other. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance signed by China and Soviet Union in February 1950. After a short period of time, Mao agreed with Stalin to send Chinese troops and to involve in the Korean War (Turner, 2014, p.95). With China's move to involve Korean War, China became as a new military and ideological threat for the United States.

Hence, it can be seen one more time that within the classical Cold War framework, labelling and constructing China as a communist threat was a deliberate act of foreign policy which was shaped for the sake of protecting and preserving American identity and American interests.

After the Chinese participation of Korean War, China was directly targeted by the U.S. who saw communist China as a direct threat for the American security, and the U.S. imposed an embargo on its trade with China (Turner, 2014, p.97).

After the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 and ideological discrepancies between Beijing and Moscow on their stand of communism, the U.S. decided to benefit from these cracks between two communist states. Then the U.S. started to maneuver diplomatically. The first round came in the 1970s, as the ideas and representations of China in the minds of American people started to change into a more positive way that paved the way for American efforts to establish new kind of relations with China.

The outstanding historic move came in July 1971, with the prominent and secret visit of Henry Kissinger as Secretary of State to China in order to meet with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. Later on, President Nixon made his historic visit to China to meet with Chairman Mao in 1972 (Turner, 2014, p.109). Kissinger and Nixon's historical maneuvers actually aimed at changing the Cold War policy of containment of China (Wang, 1991, p.191). They both took the advantages of the day and by establishing relations with China, Washington's containment policy towards Moscow had been consolidated.

Therefore, with the new rationale of the 1970s, the United States introduced a new image of China. This historical rapprochement between Washington and Beijing also echoed in the public surveys. Towards the end of the 1970s, 65 percent of the Americans declared that China and Chinese images on their minds were positive (Turner, 2014, p.121).

The vital change of China image from negative to positive resonated in the official documents. Turner (214) implies the change in the Cold War discourse and identity construction of China has changed dramatically in the documents that Mao Zedong was not mentioned as "Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party", just "Chairman". Moreover, positive images and absence of the usage of term communism directly in the announcements and official documents were also contributed the positive perception of Americans on China and Chinese (p.121). This structural change between America and China also reflected in the domestic sphere of the U.S. At the end of the 1960s and beginning of 1970s, when the American Chinese relations was started to warm up, Chinese Americans, or broadly Asian Americans, were started to be referred as 'model minority' indicating their hardworking, high level of education, their dedication to their works and their successful carriers. The term model minority was coined by the sociologist William Petersen in 1966 to imply the success stories of the Asian Americans, namely Japanese and Chinese (Model Minority, p.173).

Although the coinage and usage of the term 'model minority' intended to give honor Asian Americans, actually it has promoted the famous "American dream myth" which implies that "hard work pays off" in the U.S. Moreover, it functioned as the booster of racial differences in the American society by indicating Asian as model but still minority, as "not enough White to be a fully-fledged White American, but not a black at the same time" (Wu, 2017, p.99).

With the Deng Xiaoping's leadership as the Chairman, the positive image of China reinforced in the American public. Since Xiaoping's efforts to modernize and opening up China into world markets stood as modernizer and revolutionary act. For Americans, after Mao, Deng Xiaoping was the exact revisionist and progressive leader for the "New China". Xiaoping's 1979 visit to the United States invigorated and promoted the positive image of China and became popular among Americans (Turner, 2014, p.122). Even, Xiaoping appeared in the cover page of Time as "Man of the Year".

However, the positive atmosphere and naïve opinions on the Chinese integration of the liberal economic order were shattered by the one of the bloodiest protests in the history: Tiananmen Square protest in 1989. A group of reformists demanded political reforms of government, democratization, freedom of speech, freedom of press by criticizing corruption and inefficiency in the Chinese political system. These peaceful protests were quelled by the troops on the June 3 (Turner, 2014, p.127). After the troops controlled the protests by force some brutal scenery appeared in the news and the whole world witnessed the brutal treatment of Chinese authorities against the protestors. These brutal images, again, reversed the widespread positive image of China. Since Americans felt that they were wrong for their expectations from China in terms of democracy and human rights. Antipathy grew in the American public towards China grew day by day. Since Americans eventually confronted that the so-called democracy project targeting Chinese communist system's integration to liberal democracies were futile. Therefore, Tiananmen Square Protests which lasted with deaths of more than 1,000 people, smashed the idealized and positive China image in the eyes of American people.

The American perception of Tiananmen Square Protests revealed a truth that China lost its chance one more time to embrace and adopt civilized Western values. As Time announced from its cover page that the morning of June 4 in China ended just like "the great, peaceful dream for democracy turned into a horrible nightmare" (as cited in Turner, 2014, p.129).

3.3. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA THREAT AS A RISING POWER AND CHINESE VIRUS

Under the Deng Xiaoping's leadership, series of reforms were implemented in order to open up China and Chinese economy to the regional and global markets. The period of economic development and reforms of China which was initiated in 1978 with the historical decision of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), eventually bore fruit. Over the twenty-seven years of rapid reforms and hard work of China, it showed its capacities and strength in terms of manufacture, "labor force" and "creativity" (Bijian, 2005, p.19). However Chinese rapid growth and successful involvement into the status of developed states and regional powers with its huge economic and manufacture potential, worried the others, especially the United States. In the 1990s, in the middle of Asian financial crisis, Beijing decided to open up China into the global markets once more attending the World Trade Organization together with ongoing economic reforms at home (Bijian, 2005, p.20). With this revolutionary decision, China gain advantage from the economic developments and reforms by turning China as world's factory gradually.

All these developments together with the negative images stemming from the Tiananmen, resulted a growing concerns over the intentions and potentials of China as a dedicated regional power. In such an atmosphere, after the 2002 visit of Zheng Bijian and a research team funded by the CCP to the United States, Bijian put forward a theory or policy of "Peaceful Rise of China" (Glaser and Medeiros, 2007, p.293).

After the discussions held between the Bijian and Bush administration officials, Bijian came up with that there were serious concerns and suspicions about the Chinese increasing involvement and role in the international issues. Due to the uncertainty, Americans did not trust the Chinese intentions and its future actions. Bijian contended that these distrust and uncertainties would complexify the American Chinese relations and Chinese future plans to achieve great power status (Glaser and Medeiros, 2007, p.294). Immediately after his return to Beijing, Bijian proposed a report defining the theory of "peaceful rise of China" which approved by the Hu Jintao who was the previous general secretary of the CCP and the president of China. Bijian's theory of "peaceful rise of China" indicated the unique Chinese path of economic and political development and rise which took its roots from the Chinese culture and its socialism (Glaser and Medeiros, 2007, p.294). As Bijian asserted in his speech "The new road

of China's peaceful rise and the future of Asia", his main argument of peaceful rise of China theory centered on the idea that without aiming to capture the hegemony from the U.S., China intended to pursue a peaceful path toward its rise which would give enormous advantage not only to China but also to the world (A New Path for China's Peaceful Rise and the Future Of Asia, p.15).

With the impact of China's rise, the U.S. presidential elections have started to cover and extremely impacted by China. Since, as the history reveals that a new threat, China threat, became the current "election tool" which has signified the distinction of 'American identity' versus 'Chinese identity' (Turner, 2014, p.150).

Although the Chinese efforts and intentions to pursue the world, or namely the U.S., on its dedication to rise peacefully, China continued to remain as the hot topic in the American minds. Therefore, especially after the George W. Bush's administration, the main point of concern in the elections and foreign policy would be the same: China and its rise which stood as a partner or competitor of the U.S. The construction of Chinese problem started to be indicated implicitly with the second term of Obama Administration. Although the name China was not mentioned in Obama's "Pivot to Asia" policy, it was quite clear that the main reason of the American shift to Asia was China and its growing regional and global power. Although it was mentioned differently, from the 2011, with the announcement of "Pivot to Asia" policy, China has signified primacy in the American foreign policy (Turner, 2014, p.158).

Since China who is among the permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC), has stood as the most populous country with a huge and growing economy, a largest army and a middle class together with a manned space program and nuclear power (Callahan, 2005, 701).

It is clear that the construction of China threat posing grave danger to the American interests and its liberal democratic values and capitalist economy as well have many parallels with the American construction of 'Soviet threat' or 'Soviet other' in accordance with the Cold War rationale (Turner, 2013, p.921).

The main argument behind the political danger posed by China resulted in the articulation of the concepts of Beijing Consensus and Washington Consensus. The terms of Beijing Consensus and Washington Consensus which stands as "social constructs for the Oliver Turner (2014) regarding the main differences between China and the U.S. was coined by the Joshua Ramo in 2004 (p.136). Beijing Consensus which is seen as a direct threat for the American led liberal and capitalist world order,

has offered a state centric development and economy, or state capitalism, which represent a new model for developing countries especially in Africa and South America. Whereas Washington Consensus offers free market, capitalist economy and private property (Turner, 2013, p.921).

Although China has remained a hot topic in the American politics and foreign policy since the Obama administration, it was the 2016 US presidential elections that China has become 'the problem' of the U.S. especially after the election of Donald Trump as the forty-fifth president of the U.S. Trump's "America First Doctrine" has advocated isolationism, economic and trade protectionism (Kubo, 2019, p.59). This can be clearly inferred from the President Trump's decision to withdraw from Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations (Kawashima, 2017, p.32).

As an extraordinary president, Trump's China policies in the first years of his term remained rhetorical. However, starting with 2019 American Chinese relations has started to deteriorate. From 2018 on, President Trump's administration has adopted belligerent policies targeting China. Yao (2021) defines Trump's harsh policies toward China as the "New Cold War" (p.20). Since, in the 2018 National Defense Strategy, American Chinese relations were defined as "great power competition" indicating that the U.S. took Chinese acts as a challenge against the U.S. and its global superpower status (Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America, 2018).

Moreover, Mark Pompeo has started to refer China's ideology as a direct threat for the U.S. and its security by comparing the "Communist China" with the U.S.S.R., since for him China is now closer than the Soviet threat, "Communist China has already in American borders" he said. Pompeo also implied that the Marxist-Leninist ideology lets China to become authoritarian and aggressive at home and in the world. He added the traditional 'us versus them' dichotomy by saying that "If the free world does not change Communist China, it will change us" (as cited in Khoo, 2021, pp.5-6).

Apart from American emphasis on the ideological rivalry between America and China, more than 400 Chinese companies and universities were put in the entity list and a ban on the sale of high technology products from the American technology companies (Yao, 2021, p.21). Bilateral relations worsened after the Donald Trump's campaign to blame China for the global spread of infectious disease and global economic recession during the pandemic. Even his publicly announcement and defining the COVID as "Chinese virus" initiated war of words between the U.S. and China (Yao, 2021, p.23).

On December 1, 2019, with the announcement from Wuhan Municipal Commission new cases of pneumonia, 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) or severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic has begun. At that time, no one could have predicted what would the coronavirus pandemic brought to the world. After the spread of COVID-19 the world would have entered a new phase. On January 30, 2020, World Health Organization (WHO) announced the coronavirus outbreak as “public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) (COVID-19 Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) Global research and innovation forum, 2020).

Immediately after the WHO declaration of global pandemic, particularly Chinese people, but all Asian nations and immigrants including Japanese and Koreans, have started to be labelled as source of disease. These kinds of public harassments were worsened after the U.S. President Donald Trump’s naming the virus as “Chinese virus” at the official meeting at White House in March 2020. Asians were exposed to verbal bullying worldwide as a main reason of the outbreak and spread of the coronavirus disease. Among the verbal taunts with which Asians faced, the most effective one of these bullying was the American President Donald Trump’s preference to indicate the COVID-19 as “the Chinese virus” or “Kung-flu” instead of referring the scientific name of the respiratory disease. (Venkatesan and Joshi, 2023, p.2). President Trump’s reference and denomination of COVID-19 as “Chinese virus” or “Kung flu virus” in the wake of coronavirus pandemic resulted in escalation and provocation of the hate crimes and violence targeting Asian Americans. For instance, in March 2021, in Atlanta eight Asian American were killed by a gunman while six others were seriously injured (Sabharwal et al., 2022, p.543)

Venkatesan and Joshi (2023) contend that the growing worldwide Anti-Chinese and Anti-Asian sentiment actually has stood as a reminder of the deep-rooted stereotypical representations of Chinese especially in the U.S. as a source of disease which endanger the very existence of American society (p.3). Alexandre White (2023) refers these constructions as “epidemic orientalism” which is a term defining the phenomenon of oriental thought which represents colonial and Western view towards the “Eastern other” (p.51). “Epidemic orientalism” also refers to the superiority of White and European civilization and its power to define the “ontological separation between colonized and colonizer” (White, 2023, p.25).

The accusations from American president reminded many Chinese Americans that their ancestors were faced with the same condemnations as “being source and carriers of infectious diseases” and they were exposed to legal prevention from becoming an American citizen after the passage of Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 (Sabharwal et al., 2022, p.543).

As a popular nineteenth century American term and construction, the return of the image of “Yellow Peril” during the COVID-19 pandemic in twenty first century stands as an expression of deep-rooted concept of ‘Sinophobia’. In the 1880s, the image of “Yellow Peril” enabled Americans to see the Chinese as the agents of the emergence and outbreak of the various diseases in their own society that not only led to the Chinese Exclusion Act but also Chinese exclusion from the social life. Moreover, “Yellow Peril” argument has become an umbrella term including “advanced economic, cultural, assimilationist, racial, biological, and medical claims against the Chinese” (Zhang, 2021, p.65).

The danger of disease and stereotypical construction of others as dirty, unhealthy, inferior, and vulnerable and hazardous for the American society are common themes throughout American history to designate others (Nelkin, 2022, p.316).

The identification of “disease-based othering” refers to the foreign place outside the border of one’s country which is generally seen as a danger posed against a nation (Nossem, 2020, p.5).

Just like the nineteenth century labelling on the Chinese food and eating habits, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Wuhan, the birthplace of the COVID-19 outbreak, and the emergence of the disease have been commonly associated with the “weird eating habits” of Chinese with image of “rat-eaters” or “bat-eaters” generally (Venkatesan and Joshi, 2023, p.7).

Although the starting point for the historical and contemporary Sinophobia in the U.S. is derived from the emergence and spread of a disease, the reasons behind them are distinct. For the Sinophobia and construction of “Yellow Peril” in the nineteenth century was a direct outcome of Western opinion which pretended cultural differences of Chinese and their rejection of Western modernity. The contemporary Sinophobia and “China threat” have mostly originated from the economic, political and military rivalry between the U.S. and China. After the establishment of the PRC under the leadership of Mao Zedong, Chinese expansionism, authoritarianism, growing Chinese economy and China’s rise as an alternative to the U.S. and US led world order has turned China

into a fully-fledged rival for the U.S. that has echoed in the characterization of China during the COVID-19 pandemic by the American authorities, particularly Donald Trump (Venkatesan and Joshi, 2023, p.3).

The COVID-19 Pandemic has illustrated that from “Yellow Peril” to the “Chinese virus”, Asian Americans has remained as “forever foreigners” who have faced with discrimination constantly (Sabharwal et al., 2022, p.546). Thus, Sinophobia in twenty first century is a complicated fact as a combination of xenophobia, racism, “medicalized nativism” and “epidemic orientalism”. The historical representation and construction of China and Chinese as responsible for the emergence and spread of the diseases have provided a basis for the construction of the Sinophobia and “Chinese threat” during the COVID-19 pandemic in mostly Western countries towards the Chinese and other Asian nations who look like Chinese (Venkatesan and Joshi, 2023, p.15).

3.4. RISE OF NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF CHINA IN THE UNITED STATES

The negative impact of the COVID-19 on the American perception of China and Chinese also can be seen in the results of surveys. For instance, Pew Survey, which was published on March 4, 2021, shows that 67 percent of Americans have negative opinion about China which was 46 percent in 2018. Moreover, 89 percent of Americans take China as “enemy” or “competitor” (Pew Research Center 2021).

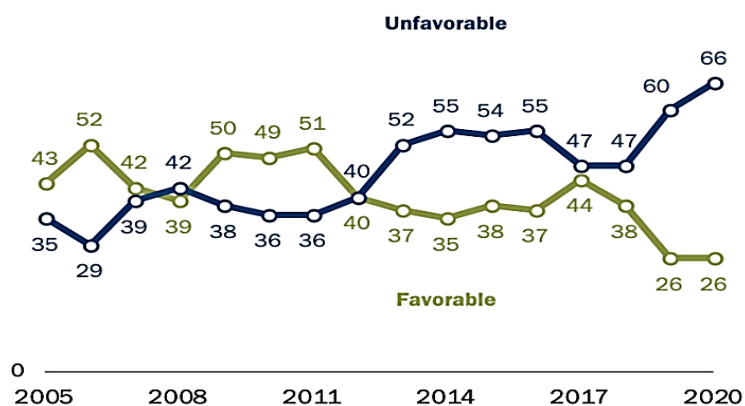


Figure 6. U.S. views of China increasingly negative amid coronavirus outbreak 2020

Started in the eighteenth century, American Chinese trade relations have gained different characteristics after the Gold Rush. Within a short period of time and with the influx of the Chinese immigrant workers arrival in the U.S. initial period of the construction of Chinese identity and perception started to flourish. Hereby, this chapter has outlined the changing nature of Chinese identity in the American history throughout

different periods in accordance with and as a reflection of the American interests and perceptions.

Defined and constructed as “Yellow Peril” and “Threatening China” in nineteenth century, China became a war time ally of the U.S. during the First and Second World Wars which eventually led to the abolishment of the notorious Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. However, the calm relations between the U.S. and China did not last too long. In the early years of Cold War, establishment of the PRC in 1949, the image of “Threatening China” returned but with a difference. This was the “Red China Threat” indicating the Communist state ideology of the newly established state in accordance with the American Cold War rationale. After more than twenty years, the U.S. decided to exploit the ideological cracks between two communist and socialist state, China, and USSR. With the great efforts of Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, and President Nixon, the U.S. struck a blow to establish a unique partnership which will give shape the world order in near future. The main motivation of the U.S. was both isolate the U.S.S.R. and drag it to fall and integrate China who was one of the important powers of the Communist bloc, into the liberal and capitalist world order. By integrating China into the American led world order, the U.S. aimed to prevent a potential rival against itself. However, not only the U.S. did not achieve its goals to integrate China into its order but also it created its own Frankenstein. Since China has become one of the developing countries with a huge economy and population thanks to the series of reform it adopted in the 1970s.

When it comes to the 2000s, China has gradually achieved regional power status and it has already taken steps to become global power. In the same period of time, the U.S. as the victorious hegemon of the world, were busy with its wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the 2010s, the U.S. has comprehended that China’s rise is not totally peaceful as they claim. Therefore, Obama Administration has defined the Asia-Pacific region as their top priority. From 2011 on, the U.S. has declared itself as a “Pacific nation” under the “Pivot to Asia” policy. In the following period, with the Donald Trump’s presidency, “China threat” has become more and more visible both in the domestic and foreign policies of the U.S. This was also the period of “war of words” between two countries as the tension has risen up.

Finally, the bilateral relations of America and China has worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic which impacted the world dramatically. The negative atmosphere has

heightened by the deliberate speeches and constructions of the new infectious disease as “Chinese virus” in the President Trump and high officials' statements which brought back the nineteenth century stereotypical representations of Chinese people as “Yellow Peril” indicating germ carriers. Herein, this chapter illustrates and examines the way United States has constructed the image of China and “China threat” in conformity with the American vital interests and perception together with the historical evolution of the “China Threat”.

In the context of this chapter, the historical background, and contemporary negative perceptions on the identity of China and American construction of Chinese identity as other has examined. With reference to the historical background of the Chinese identity in the United States, this chapter also demonstrated the stereotypical representations of Chinese other in the United States by using illustrations of different periods indicating the dynamic (re)presentation of Chinese identity constructed in the U.S.

CHAPTER 4: THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA IDENTITY AS THREAT

In the above-mentioned chapters of this thesis, the impact and role of American exceptionalism as a concept on the construction of American national identity are addressed. American exceptionalism is examined as the central concept of American identity within its religious, political, and cultural components. Moreover, American exceptionalism just as the American national identity, has a dynamic nature which opens to the change. Barack Obama's election as the first African American president of the United States of America stands as the symbol of dynamic and changing nature of American exceptionalism as Obama, himself, states that he believes in American kind of exceptionalism indicating indispensable character of America for the world (Ereli, 2018, p.92).

Moreover, keeping the exceptional nature of American identity in the mind, the United States constructed the Chinese identity based on the American domestic experiences after the Chinese immigrant workers started to immigrate in the U.S. in the nineteenth century. Just as the construction of American self-identity, Chinese identity construction as the other has preserved its essence as the identity of 'the other' and gained an international characteristic with undergoing change stemming from the concept of "rise of China". As it is examined in the previous chapters that Chinese identity construction and the stereotypical representations were valid for domestic realm, yet they evolved over time and obtained the identity of foreign 'Chinese other'.

As it is indicated in the methodology part, Chapter 1, this thesis aims at analyzing the discursive construction of the identity of "Chinese other" as antonym of American self-identity echoed in the speeches and texts from the different US administrations in official documents and speeches from the President Barack Obama and Donald Trump. DHA as sub-branch of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a broad lens to examine the relationship between the identity and foreign policy. It brings light to the discursive construction of "us" and "them" dichotomy together with the identity construction of different and distinct others in societies. As its name suggests, DHA emphasizes the historical background of texts defending the idea that historical point of view is highly relevant in terms of identity construction of other (Rumelili and Aydın-Düzgit, 2018, p.295).

With illustrating the historical development of Chinese identity in the U.S., this chapter aims to point the historical development and changes in the construction of the identity of China as “the other” in the Barack Obama’s policy of “US Pivot to Asia” from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s foreign policy article “America’s Pacific Century” in 2011 and President Trump’s UN General Assembly Speech on the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2020 as the contemporary examples of the construction of “the other” identity in US foreign policy will be examined with discourse historical approach (DHA) in order to understand how ‘American self’ and ‘Chinese other’ have been constructed and their meanings within the historical background.

DHA is generally employed in order to distinguish the characteristics of discursive strategies in texts and discourses together with examination of their historical alteration and evolution over time focusing on the different topics, cultural and political drivers behind them (Rumelili and Aydın-Düzgit, 2018, p.296). The construction of ‘Chinese other’ in different texts and documents from the Obama and Trump administrations in this chapter will be analyzed with the main pillars of DHA which includes historical background of the selected texts, contents and topics of the discourse, and discursive strategies of discursive strategies of nomination which indicates the references of each actors in the texts; predication which examines the attributed characteristics and features of the actors in the selected text; and argumentation which reflects the main arguments and argumentation schemes adopted to justify the author’s ideas in the selected text (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p.44).

China which emerged as one of the leading figures of Asian Miracle in 1990s, has risen as an antagonist to the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific when the U.S. was dealing with the new wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The first round of US-China relations which was started by the Kissinger and President Nixon, the widespread rationale and opinion in the U.S. was that Chinese economic integration to the American led liberal economic system eventually paved the way for a change in Chinese government and political system’s integration to the liberal system and its alteration from the communist state to liberal capitalist state. Yet, the American hopes have failed, and China has started to rise as a challenger and a new power. Then, China was started to be referred as “strategic competitor” with the Bush administration, but September 11 attacks change the course of the U.S. who started to concentrate on mainly in the Middle East and Afghanistan. 2008 Global Financial Crisis brought forth the vulnerability of the U.S. economy and

Chinese system of state capitalism as an alternative. Only after the 2008 Global economic crisis, the United States has recognized that it has started losing its hegemonic capabilities as well as rise of China as a challenger. In this regard, especially in the post 2008 period, the attention of the United States has started to shift to the Asia Pacific region, with specific focus to China. That is the exact reason of Obama administration's adaptation of a new foreign policy strategy, namely Asia Pivot. Therefore, the main concern of Asia Pivot Policy of the United States has been on trade, economic, military, and political collaborations leading by the United States. Moreover, the protagonists of Asia Pivot Policy have been the traditional American allies in the region, since the United States has found that this once the U.S. needs its allies to tackle with a new rising power: China.

Although Asia has stood as one of the important regions for especially American trade, it became a "top priority" on the U.S. foreign policy agenda with the Obama administration. As the manifestation of "U.S. pivot to Asia" strategy the *Foreign Policy* article "America's Pacific Century" of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will be analyzed within this context.

4.1. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA IDENTITY AS STRATEGIC RIVAL: AN ANALYSIS OF CLINTON'S "AMERICA'S PACIFIC CENTURY"

As a subbranch of Critical Discourse Analysis, Discourse-Historical Approach analyzes the construction, (re)presentation of self and other and their linguistic reflections embedded in discourses with a specific focus on the historical context, development and change of these constructions (Aydın-Düzgüt and Rumelili, 2019, pp. 295-296). In the analysis of texts, Discourse-Historical Approach shows that identities have been (re)produced through different texts and discourses in different periods.

Conceptualizing identity as a discursive concept, this part of thesis aims at analyzing the representations of American self-identity and 'Chinese other' in two main texts, together with their historical developments in different periods. Thus, DHA is employed to the selected texts in order to find out the structures of discursive strategies and their historical development to reveal the change of topics and discourses over time (Aydın-Düzgüt and Rumelili, 2019, p.296).

Accordingly, the first part of this chapter is included the DHA analysis of Hillary Clinton's Foreign Policy article "America's Pacific Century" with a historical context of the article,

contents and topics of the article and discursive strategies of nomination, predication, and argumentation. The main principle of the Discourse-Historical Approach as its name suggests, is to handle with discourse and text as historical products, so historical background of discourses and texts is a must and first step of Discourse-Historical Approach.

The selected article “America’s Pacific Century” was published by the Foreign Policy magazine on 11 October 2011. The author of article is the 67th Secretary of State of the United States, Hillary Clinton. The publication of article is followed by President Obama’s announcement of US Pivot to Asia on 17 November 2011 in the Australian Parliament. The Pivot includes a series of regional initiatives led by the United States to bolster the American leadership in the region for the sake of economic, military, and political stability of the region. Yet, the main concern of the U.S. is to keep China’s growing regional and global power and influence under the control.

4.1.1. Historical Background:

Since starting from 2011, the U.S. has embarked a new foreign policy orientation, Asia Pivot, in order to balance the region over the mounting concerns of China’s rise, not economic but also military rise. After a long period of foreign policy which was mainly build on the President Bush’s campaign of “War on Terror” concentrating mainly on the Middle East, the U.S. has faced that it neglected the rising power of Asian countries, namely China. This moment of realization came with the outcome and impact of the Great Recession of 2008. After the Great Recession, China has started to challenge American led liberal economic order with its own system of state capitalism. Hence, economic, and military challenge has brought forth the further development of the construction of “Chinese other” in both the government and public.

After elected with great hope and intentions, it is thought to be that Obama’s presidency would be sui generis and different one signaling the break from the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) dominated racialized past of the U.S. Since Obama who is supposed to be a non-establishment candidate and his opposition against the Iraq War, stood as brand-new face of American power contrary to George W. Bush. Moreover, election of Obama as the first African American president of the U.S., would serve to strengthen American soft power (Ledwidge, 2014, p. 67).

Obama administration comprehended that the economic crisis of 2008 and domestic recession in the U.S. particularly triggered by the previous administration need to be handle with collective and cooperative means and actions together with G-8 countries as well as China, India, and Brazil (Indyk et al., 2012, p.8). Obama administration became aware of the growing dangers stemming from the several issues such as regional and global rise of China, nuclear threat of North Korea, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, natural disasters, climate change and their impact on the stability and commerce of Asia as well as global trade (Davidson, 2014, p.78). Obama realized that instead of unilateral American actions and responses to the period of new challenges and new threats with which the U.S. faced, there should be multilateral actions, developments, and arrangements. Therefore, Obama favored the multilateralism as opposed to the Bush administration. Not just economic recession and domestic economic problems, but also Asia, particularly China, stood as the main problems with which Obama administration had to face. After the September 11, 2001, attacks, nearly whole American military power had to engage with the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. While the U.S. had been busy with fighting against terrorism globally, other powers found proper ground to develop themselves, and Asia led this trend. Due to the fact that America wanted to maintain the balance of power and project its power in the region, the U.S. started to concentrate on Asia. Hence, Obama realized that China needed a special American attention as he declares "China as a 'major power' should be treated with the appropriate respect' (Indyk et al., 2012, p.32).

Instead of old established American foreign policy based on the assumption that the U.S. has to project its power by finding solutions and responses to the various dangers, threats, and challenges against the global problems, Obama administration adopted a new approach appreciating greater value to enhance global cooperation and engagement (Davidson, 2014, pp.80-81). The basic idea behind this new multilateralism of Obama administration originated from the position that in a changing world, the U.S. was no longer able to share all the burden of new threats and difficulties. While, still emphasizing the indispensable role and status of the U.S., Obama administration declared a new approach to combine cooperative initiations of regional and global levels together with American leadership in order to make world safe and keep economic developments both in the Asia and in the world. That is the main rationale behind the "U.S. pivot to Asia" policy.

Historical relations between the U.S. and Asia dated back to the nineteenth century. As Obama declared that the U.S. has been a Pacific state for more than a century after 1898 (Shambaugh, 2013, p.11). Shambaugh (2013) asserts that this new Asia pivot is “new and not new”. It is not new since the U.S. considers the Asia Pacific region as important zone which has close historical ties and relations with the U.S., but Asia did not stand as the “highest priority” for the American foreign policy. In that regard, Obama administration is the first administration which declared Asia as the top priority for the U.S. (p.10). Although the term “U.S. pivot to Asia” reminds the U.S. return, a new form of containment or rebalance to Asia, the pivot policy of the U.S. actually demonstrated that rather than pivoting the Asia, it aimed to strengthen the American presence in the region with military, economic, commercial, diplomatic, political and cultural activities led by the U.S. (Davidson, 2014, p.81). This strategy also aimed at improving the capabilities of traditional American allies, Japan, South Korea and Australia, in the Asia, in order to check the power relations and prevent future domination of a regional power, namely China.

The American strategic pivot to Asia-Pacific region became a fully-fledged policy with the announcement of President Obama in November 2011. This pivotal policy paved the way for the gradual shift and reduction of the American military presence from Iraq and Afghanistan to the Asia-Pacific region. The policy attempted to maintain American power and leadership in the Asia-Pacific together with counter-balance China’s rise and growing impact in the region (Castro, 2013, p.332). In Australian parliament on November 17, 2011, President Obama delivered as speech and made a “deliberate and strategic decision and announcement to portray the “US as a Pacific nation will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region and its future, by upholding core principles and in close partnership with our allies and friends.” (Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament, 2011). Hence, the “US pivot to Asia” has officially started with the President Obama’s announcement to expand and develop American military presence in the Asia-Pacific by deploying 2,500 Marines to Darwin, Australia (Southgate, 2017, p.3).

The U.S. pivot to Asia policy consists of five core principles which reflect the American motivation to engage in the Asia-Pacific region. First, the U.S. uttered that it attached a great role and importance to the security of the region. Second, the U.S. demonstrated its desire to reengage with the regional organizations notably

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Third, the U.S. aimed at established a sustained and powerful cooperative relationship based on mutual and continuous communication with China in order to avoid future misunderstandings and miscalculation. Lastly, the U.S. aimed at developing the economic and commercial ties through partnerships such as Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) (Southgate,2017, pp.1-2).

American reengagement policy to Asia provides new ways for both the U.S. and Asian states to extend their relations for the sake of their mutual benefits (Castro, 2013, p.335). The core of American balance policy towards Asia Pacific took its shape from the framework of “scores of bilateral and multilateral meetings” which target establish and promote old ties as well as new kinds of relationships and support economic and commercial developments in Asia (Davidson, 2014, pp.78-79).

The main aim of the U.S. is not containing China, yet to make it a “responsible stakeholder” in the Asia-Pacific (De Castro,2013, p.335). Moreover, the U.S. announced that it would be a pleasure for the U.S. to see China participate them and their efforts to establish multilateral cooperations in order to demonstrate that the U.S. did not intend to check China’s power and prevent its development (Davidson, 2014, p.81).

4.1.2. Contents and Topics of the Discourse:

As second step of Discourse-Historical Approach, contents, and main topics of discourse in selected texts are identified. In the context of the reengagement policy of the U.S. towards Asia-Pacific region by constructing itself as a “Pacific state”, Hillary Clinton as the author of the article “America’s Pacific Century” discusses two main topics regarding the reasons of the “U.S. pivot to Asia” and American construction of China. Therefore, the article focuses on the underlying motives which are composed of new challenges and problems in the region, behind the American initiation to pivot to Asia as means of justification of American involvement in the region as well as refers to the American and Chinese identities.

4.1.3. Discursive Strategies:

As Reisigl and Wodak point out that discursive strategies are basically a systematic way of linguistic usage in order to implement political, social and psychological aims.

They basically reflect the construction of self and other, together with idealized self-representation and negative representation of other (Ramanathan et al. 2020, p.38). Among discursive strategies, nomination, predication, and argumentation are used in the analysis of selected texts.

4.1.3.1. Nomination:

As one of the discursive strategies, nomination reveals the construction and categorization of people or group mentioned in the text as members of in-group and out-group by the author (Ramanathan et al. 2020, p.39).

In “America’s Pacific Century”, Hillary Clinton as the Secretary of State, initiated and announced a new American foreign policy orientation towards Asia-Pacific region. For Clinton (2011), regional strategy that U.S. has adopted under the Asia Pivot policy includes “six key lines of action: strengthening bilateral security alliances; deepening our working relationships with **emerging powers**, including with **China**; engaging with regional multilateral institutions; expanding trade and investment; forging a broad-based military presence; and advancing democracy and human rights” (p.58).

The Asia-Pacific has become a key driver of global politics. Stretching from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas, the region spans two oceans—the Pacific and the Indian—that are increasingly linked by shipping and strategy. It boasts almost half the world’s population. It includes many of the key engines of the global economy, as well as the largest emitters of greenhouse gases. It is home to **several of our key allies** and important **emerging powers like China, India, and Indonesia** (Clinton, 2011, p.57)

In this regard, Clinton employs multiple references to describe China as an emerging power and a key (f)actor in the region by depicting its dynamic economy, and its role in manufacture sector as a leader in the Asian market. Clinton clearly portrays China as a “strategic power” not a traditional American ally. Clinton calls China which needs a brand-new approach and policy:

China has prospered as part of the open and rules-based system that the United States helped to build and works to sustain. And today, **China represents one of the most challenging and consequential bilateral relationships the United States has ever had to manage.** This calls for careful, steady, dynamic stewardship (Clinton, 2011, p.59).

Clinton contends that although it seems that the U.S. concerns about China’s rise, Obama administration has boldly declared that two major powers in the Asia-Pacific can benefit each other’s growing economic, commercial, and political integration and cooperation. However, Clinton puts emphasis on the multilateral and bilateral

cooperation between the U.S. and China as common sense of the Obama administration in order to make China integrate the U.S led economic and world order and prevent potential misunderstandings which can be resulted in conflict in the Asia-Pacific.

Clinton puts forward the different characteristics of the U.S. and China, but rather than these differences she adds, the main focus of the “U.S. Pivot to Asia” policy is to manage those differences. This can be regarded as the abandon of the old-established American policy indicating a regime change in a targeted region or a state. Hence, Clinton asserts that both sides should “avoid unrealistic expectations”. Nevertheless, Hillary Clinton does not give up calling China to adopt more transparent approach and policies in domestic and international realm.

By exemplifies the successful American Chinese cooperation during the 2008 global financial crisis Clinton demonstrates the importance of the cooperation of the U.S. and China for both the advantage of two countries and the world: “In the aftermath of the global financial crisis, the United States and China worked effectively through the G-20 to help pull the global economy back from the brink. The U.S. and China have to build on that cooperation” (Clinton, 2011, p.60).

After mentioning the positive sides of China as one of the Asian giants in the Asia, Clinton adds some remarks for China that it needs a reform to conduct a fair and better economic practice especially with the U.S. companies, to build a more transparent political system highlighting the importance of human rights together with her call for China to respect international law.

We can work together on these objectives, but **China still needs to take important steps toward reform.** In particular, we are working with China to end **unfair discrimination against U.S.** and other foreign companies or against their innovative technologies, remove preferences for domestic firms, and end measures that disadvantage or appropriate foreign intellectual property. And we look to China to take steps to allow its currency to appreciate more rapidly, both against the dollar (Clinton, 2011, p.60).

On the other hand, Clinton depicts the U.S. in a positive way to emphasize the growing importance of the United States in the region as a leader. Clinton (2011) adds that “When I talk to my Asian counterparts, one theme consistently stands out: They still want **America to be an engaged and creative partner in the region’s** flourishing trade and financial interactions” (p.62). She mentions that her team has witnessed

perpetual need for the American leadership wherever she goes, but especially in Asian countries who need American leadership to establish and promote security and stability in the region vis a vis rising powers. “There is a demand from the region that **America plays an active role in the agenda-setting** of these institutions—and it is in our interests as well that they be effective and responsive” (Clinton, 2011, p.61).

By virtue of **our unique geography, the United States is both an Atlantic and a Pacific power**. We are proud of our European partnerships and all that they deliver. Our challenge now is to build a web of partnerships and institutions across the Pacific that is as durable and as consistent with American interests and values as the web we have built across the Atlantic. That is the touchstone of our efforts in all these areas. Our **treaty alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand** are the fulcrum for our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific (Clinton, 2011, p. 58).

Thanks to its unique geographical and historical ties, the U.S. stands as both an Atlantic and a Pacific power. Clinton highlights the power of the U.S. to form and create enduring worldwide partnerships ranging from the Europe to the Middle East. Due to its leadership, the U.S. has to burden its fundamental responsibilities and get involved in the Asia-Pacific region as the responsible world leader who stands as organizer of the world order after the Second World War and defender of the free world against the everchanging threats. “President Obama has led **a multifaceted and persistent effort to embrace fully our irreplaceable role in the Pacific**, spanning the entire U.S. government” (Clinton, 2011, p.58). Clinton reaffirms that “the irreplaceable role of the U.S.” requires its engagement in almost every part of the world.

Unlike China, by emphasizing the international value of the human rights, Clinton demonstrates that the U.S. has widely known as the champion of freedom, democracy and human rights since these values lies at the heart of the American character. Together with those liberal and very American values, the U.S. favors multilateralism in order to establish new strategic partnerships and cooperative initiatives instead of conflicts and war. American belief in multilateralism stands as an outcome of both its leader status and its adherence to the liberal and democratic universal values.

The fact is that **a thriving America is good for China and a thriving China is good for America**. We both have **much more to gain from cooperation than from conflict**. But you cannot build a relationship on aspirations alone. It is up to both of us to more consistently translate positive words into **effective cooperation** (Clinton, 2011, p.59).

One can grasped the idealized identification of the U.S. with Clinton’s usage of specific adjectives to describe the nature of the American characteristics and intent to develop

a new policy regarding the Asia including peaceful, democratic, cradle of political and religious freedom. It is the American model of free democracy and enterprise as the “unmatched” and important source of prosperity and progress internally and externally. Clinton contends that the U.S. has capacity and power to lead the world in the upcoming century just as it did before.

4.1.3.2. Predication:

Predication refers to a strategy of author’s intention to portray and describe people or group with their positive or negative attributions. Metaphors and stereotypes can be used to depict actors. Predication strategy mainly describes the intentional expressions used by the politicians generally (Ramanathan et al. 2020, p.39).

Clinton refers China as one of the Asian giants among the U.S. and India and highlights the Chinese importance for the U.S. as rising power and a partner. It can be deduced from the article that the U.S. conceives China not as its equivalent but as a rising ‘regional’ power which has a great impact on international politics but not a great power. Growing concern of America’s traditional allies, namely Japan, South Korea, and Australia, due to the rising Chinese activities and impact together with growing Chinese military and economic power in the region is referred in the article.

Just as **Asia is critical to America’s future, an engaged America is vital to Asia’s future**. The region is eager for our **leadership** and our business—perhaps more so than at any time in modern history. **We are the only power** with a network of strong alliances in the region (Clinton, 2011, pp.57-58).

Thus, the U.S. as a responsible leader has to respond the calls from its deep-rooted allies in the Asia-Pacific. Rising China also stands as a vital challenging issue for the American future in the region economically and politically. That is why the U.S. has to conduct a necessary policy to discuss the future projections of possible areas of cooperation and conflicts carefully for the sake of the U.S., China, the region and the world.

Throughout the article, Clinton constantly refers to the Obama administration’s adherence to the multilateral approach and universal democratic values adopted by the U.S. which prioritizes cooperation and collective action with emphasizing transparency and partnership rather than misunderstandings which easily turn into clashes and conflicts.

But even more than our military might or the size of our economy, our most potent asset as a nation is the **power of our values**—in particular, our steadfast support for **democracy and human rights**. This speaks to **our deepest**

national character and is at the **heart of our foreign policy**, including our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific region. As we deepen our engagement with partners with whom we disagree on these issues, we will continue to urge them to embrace reforms that would improve governance, protect human rights, and advance political freedoms (Clinton, 2011, p.63).

However, at the same time, the dominant discourse of the Hillary Clinton in the article resonates the underlying idea of American superiority. Since its didactic tone which calls China what it should do, Clinton lists the certain aspects that the U.S. sees as deficiencies of China. Therefore, it is apparent that the U.S. does not take China as its equal, rather the U.S. considers its right to give advice and guide China on the certain issues as leader. Clinton's emphasis on transparency that the U.S. expects from China, basically signifies that China has lack of those transparent policies and approaches which the U.S. inherits from the beginning:

The United States and the international community have watched China's efforts to modernize and expand its military, and we have sought clarity as to its intentions. Both sides would benefit from sustained and substantive military-to-military engagement that increases **transparency**. So we look to **Beijing** to overcome its **reluctance** at times and join us in forging a durable military-to-military dialogue. And we need to work together to strengthen the Strategic Security Dialogue, which brings together military and civilian leaders to discuss sensitive issues like maritime security and cybersecurity (Clinton, 2011, pp.59-60).

Moreover, after annotating America's concerns over China's lack of transparency, democratic values and human rights, Clinton lists India and Indonesia as the "two of the most dynamic and significant democratic powers of Asia" (Clinton, 2011, p.60). It is noteworthy that China is not included in the America's list of democracies in the Asia-Pacific region. While India and Indonesia are included in the list although Democracy Ranking in 2011 India ranks 70 and Indonesia ranks 67, China ranks 101 (Scores of Democracy Ranking, 2011).

Clinton asserts that the primary aim of the U.S. is not containment but reengagement and balance in the Asia. After Clinton portrays American identity with direct references to the democratic values in an idealistic way just like the opposite of China, she defends that the new American strategy of "pivot to Asia" is not actually a new one.

We cannot and do not aspire to **impose our system on other countries**, but we do believe that **certain values are universal**—that people in every nation in the world, including in Asia, cherish them—and that they are intrinsic to stable, peaceful, and prosperous countries. Ultimately, it is up to the people of Asia to pursue their own rights and aspirations, just as we have seen people do all over the world (Clinton, 2011, p.63).

Rather, considering the U.S as a Pacific nation, Clinton asserts that the U.S. comes back its home in the Asia-Pacific by strengthening its bonds with the region. The main argument of the Obama administration for the “U.S. pivot to Asia” policy comprises that American past and relations in the region has dated back, not a new one as the U.S. has in the Middle East. Thus, the American return or reengagement in the Asia-Pacific stems from the certain reasons such as the growing economic and military importance of the region, the need and call for the American leadership for the stability and security of the region from American allies, the increasing need for the American values especially multilateralism and cooperation in the region, a necessity of balance of power in the Asia in order to check growing Chinese assertive moves.

4.1.3.3. Argumentation:

Argumentation strategy refers to the analysis of discourses and moments which reveal the attempts of authors to legitimize and justify the positive or negative action as the product (Ramanathan et al. 2020, p.39). Within argumentation strategy, *topoi* is another tool in order to convince the audience of discourse with connecting arguments directly to the conclusion to justify the policies (as cited in Özoflu, 2022, p.77). As an argumentation scheme, *topos* of history is utilized as a way of giving examples from history and establishes a cause-and-effect analogy with past examples. *Topos* of history aims at teaching certain actions lead to certain consequences based on historical examples (Balkan-Şahin, 2022, p.66). Hillary Clinton in her foreign policy article dwells upon an argumentation line in analyzing and manifesting the “U.S. pivot to Asia” policy. While discussing the role of the Asia-Pacific and China in the formation of new American foreign policy towards the region, Clinton applies *topos* of history to reinvigorate her argument of the U.S. reengagement and balance in the region together with accelerating necessity of a new policy to counter Chinese power and activities in the region.

At a time when the region is building a more mature security and economic architecture to promote stability and prosperity, **U.S. commitment there is essential**. It will help build that architecture and pay dividends for continued **American leadership** well into this century, **just as our post-World War II commitment** to building a comprehensive and lasting transatlantic network of institutions and relationships has paid off many times over —and continues to do so. The time has come for the **United States to make similar investments as a Pacific power**, a strategic course set by President Barack Obama from the outset of his administration and one that is already yielding benefits (Clinton, 2011, p.57).

By using the *topos* of history, Clinton resembles the post-Second World War atmosphere which was shaped and designed by the American leadership and the gradual increase for the American help and assistance in the Asia-Pacific region. Just as the post war years, Clinton highlights the vital role of the American leadership in revival and operationalization of the modern organizations and cooperations in the Asia-Pacific.

But even more than our military might or the size of our economy, our most potent asset as a nation is the **power of our values**—in particular, our steadfast support for **democracy and human rights**. This speaks to **our deepest national character** and is at the **heart of our foreign policy**, including our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific region. As we deepen our engagement with partners with whom we disagree on these issues, we will continue to urge them to embrace reforms that would improve governance, protect human rights, and advance political freedoms (Clinton, 2011, p.63).

Although China is not referred as a direct rival or adversary, yet Clinton identifies China as ‘the other’ vis a vis an idealized ‘American self-identity’. Identification of China as the other can be induced from the certain values which are attributed to the U.S. and not to China. While Clinton portrays the U.S. as the leader of free world and champion of democracy, human rights, and international law, she urges China to adopt these principles and make itself more transparent. In this respect, although it is not directly mentioned, one can infer from the discursive reproduction of the Chinese other in Clinton’s article that China is described as the rising power lack of liberal and democratic values which underlines Chinese identity as antidemocratic, autocratic deprived of freedom of speech. Therefore, the U.S. identifies itself as a leader and its very American principles as universal, it demands from China to adopt these values by joining the club of democracy led by the U.S. which allows rise of China under the shadow of America just like India.

After the U.S. has accomplished its duties in Iraq and Afghanistan, Clinton indicates that time has come to comprehend “new global realities”.

The new realities require the U.S. to innovate, to compete, and to lead in new ways. Rather than pull back from the world, the U.S. need to press forward and **renew American leadership**. In a time of scarce resources, there’s no question that the U.S. need to invest them wisely where they will yield the biggest returns, which is why the **Asia- Pacific represents such a real 21st-century opportunity for the U.S.** (Clinton, 2011, p.63).

Clinton finalizes her article by indicating the “unmatched capability of the United States” to integrate and balance anywhere in the world:

Our capacity to come back stronger is unmatched in modern history. It flows from our model of free democracy and free enterprise, a model that remains the most powerful source of prosperity and progress known to humankind. I hear everywhere I go that the world still looks to the United States for leadership. Our military is by far the strongest, and our economy is by far the largest in the world. Our workers are the most productive. Our universities are renowned the world over. So there should be no doubt that America has the capacity to secure and sustain our global leadership in this century as we did in the last (Clinton, 2011, p. 63).

4.2. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA IDENTITY AS DIRECT THREAT: ANALYSIS OF DONALD TRUMP'S SPEECH IN THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Donald Trump has appeared as an extraordinary president in the period of sharp competition between the U.S. and China. Apart from his predecessors Donald Trump took China as his main concern in 2016 presidential elections campaigns. At first, Trump criticized China domestically, then in various international platforms Trump depicted China as the main reason of American unemployment due to China's manipulating strategy of Chinese yuan. Trump has resurrected the deep-rooted stereotypical identifications of China and Chinese people in the American domestic politics.

Due to the upcoming 2020 presidential election together with the rise of COVID-19 casualties in the U.S., the period in which Trump's UNGA speech was delivered, was the tensest period of American and Chinese bilateral relations in recent history. Previously, Trump directly targeted China in his inauguration address and domestic speeches for his domestic voters not an international community.

The selected article Remarks by President Trump to the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly was published by the White House Archive on September 22, 2020. The author of the article is President Donald J. Trump. The publication date of speech is noteworthy since this speech is given as the first international statement of Donald Trump after the eight months of the first COVID-19 incidence in the United States.

4.2.1. Historical Background:

China has been on the American agenda for many years. Starting from Nixon to the Obama, all of eight presidents engaged China to establish and maintain relations with China. Presidents favored opening up the American market to the Chinese products. Besides Clinton and Bush administrations supported China's entrance to the World

Trade Organization (WTO) that were harshly criticized by Donald Trump (Feigenbaum, 2017, p.35).

Under the leadership of Xi Jinping who took office in 2012, China initiated and adopted its active and assertive economic, military and diplomatic policies both in the Asia-Pacific and beyond with economic and commercial institutions of Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Belt and Road initiative, its military policies of active Chinese involvement and existence in the South China Sea by growing Chinese military and maritime power, and diplomatic efforts to extend its relations beyond the region (Lanteigne, 2016, p.1). Establishment of new international organizations initiated by the Beijing, such as Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in 2013 with fifty-seven charter members included American allies and “Belt and Road Infrastructure Initiative” with the purpose of economic support to build new railways, roads, ports in the Asia-Pacific region and other parts of the world, were among the assertive programs and policies which were adopted by the Beijing. Therefore, Washington’s presence and power projections has shaken by China’s assertive military, political and diplomatic policies in the South China Sea and East China Sea as well as in the whole region (Feigenbaum, 2017, p.37).

Obama administration decided to take firm posture against China and President Obama initiated a brand-new strategy called “American pivot to Asia” citing the growing military presence of China in south China Sea and increasing Chinese assertive policies on economy, trade, diplomacy, and cyber-security which impacted the Asia-Pacific region as well as the world. Rather than adopting a harsh policies against China, Obama administration preferred to define American “pivot to Asia” as a policy of reengagement and rebalancing in the region (Hu, 2018, p.62).

Although the growing Chinese involvement together with its assertive and active policies which could be interpreted as direct challenge against the U.S. in the region by the several American presidents including Clinton, Bush and Obama who had gradually changed their tone of voices by depicting China as ‘strategic competitor’ and ‘future rival’ to the direct threat against the American presence both in the Asia-Pacific and in the world, it was Donald Trump who has been vocal to criticize China in his 2016 presidential campaign and during his term as the forty fifth president of the U.S. Trump’s China rhetoric was built on the specific topics of China’s unfair trade and currency policies which had brought devastation to the American economy. Trump’s

choice of referring China as 'currency manipulator' stemmed from his belief that China deliberately kept its yuan low in order to bolster exports (Lanteigne, 2016, p.1).

Contrary to the previous presidents who committed to defend and support the postwar international order under the American leadership, by calling himself as "anti-establishment president" Trump owed one and only vision: putting the American interests and preferences before anything else (Hu, 2018, p.66). By labelling China as "currency manipulator" and main reason of American unemployment, Trump built his 2016 election rhetoric on mainly China. Later he imposed a 45 percent tariff on Chinese goods exporting from China to the Washington. Furthermore, Trump broke the American old-established "One China policy" by a telephone conversation with Taiwan that marked the first American-Taiwanese contact since 1979. On the other hand, Trump's foreign policy based on his "America first" ideology aimed at redesigning the U.S. foreign policy orientations towards China. As Trump dinned into the American public that the U.S. foreign policy under his administration would solely focus and based on "American national security and American interest" (Hu, 2018, p.62). Trade, economic and industry policies which prioritized American interests and return of manufacturing industry to the America in order to reduce the unemployment rate and halt the transfer of factories and manufacturing sector to the Asia, mainly China, together with tax cuts, policies of restriction of immigration from especially Muslim countries and Mexico were main components of Trump's economic and political program (Stanzel et l.,2018, p.5).

Donald Trump' s overall foreign policy was oriented within the framework of "America first policy" which reflected his election motto of "Make America Great Again" (Stanzel et al., 2018, p.4). President Donald Trump elaborated his "America first foreign policy" as "principled realism rooted in shared beliefs, goals, interests and values" in his Address to the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2017 by declaring that:

The United States will forever be a great friend to the world, and especially to its allies. But we can no longer be taken advantage of, or enter into a one-sided deal where the United States gets nothing in return. As long as I hold this office, I will defend America's interests above all else (United States of America His Excellency Donald Trump President, 2017).

Further, Trump emphasized that just like the other leaders of other countries, Trump would and should always stand for the American interests, putting America first. Adding

that the U.S. under Trump administration “want harmony and friendship, not conflict and strife. America is guided by outcomes, not ideology” (Remarks by President Trump to the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 2017).

Different from previous administrations particularly Obama administration who aimed at rebalancing China through multilateral and cooperative means, Trump administration preferred to deal with China by evaluating its policies on a case-by-case basis and adopting more interest-oriented pragmatic approach focusing on results and profits (Hu, 2018, pp.68-69). Hence, announcing the end of Obama’s “Pivot to Asia”, Donald Trump announced his own version of “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” policy. Although the name of policies changed their nature remained the same: containing China’s activities and policies which aim to dominate Asia-Pacific region, renewal and consolidation of partnerships and alliances in Asia with namely traditional American allies such as Japan, Australia, South Korea and India (Hu, 2018, p.71).

4.2.2. Content and Topics of Discourse:

In the context of Chinese American relations and the construction of Chinese identity in official US statements, Donald Trump in his speech at the 75th session of the United States General Assembly on September 22, 2020, discusses the two main questions: “What are the Chinese actions and activities which are depicted as threat by Donald Trump?” and “How does President Trump identify the United States in contrast to China?”. Therefore, President Trump’s UN Speech of 2020 is constituted by a discourse on threats which stem from the Chinese rising power globally and its growing “maleficent” activities together with distinct representations of American and Chinese identities.

4.2.3. Discursive Strategies:

As Ruth Wodak defends that politicians have generally utilized sets of strategies in order to legitimize and justify their actions generally through specific representations of ideal self against a negative other. These strategies called as discursive strategies such as nomination, predication, and argumentation are used to characterize positive self and negative other (Balkan-Şahin, 2020, p.65).

4.2.3.1. Nomination:

Nomination strategy refers to the linguistic tools to categorize, compare and help to construct in-group and out-group (Balkan-Şahin, 2020, pp.65-66). With regard to discursive construction of identities, President Trump mentions China and Chinese identity with specific instances. At first, Trump refers Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) as invisible enemy which has caused loss of millions of lives, then he directly accuses China that Trump considers as responsible for the outbreak of the plague as well as its spread:

Seventy-five years after the **end of World War II** and the founding of the United Nations, we are once again engaged in a **great global struggle**. We have waged a **fierce battle against the invisible enemy—the China virus**—which has claimed countless lives in 188 countries (O'Brien, 2020, p.105).

Trump portrays China as deceitful since China tries to hide the outbreak of the disease and misguide the World Health Organization (WHO) which was also accused by Trump due to its increasing ties with China. Trump criticizes both China and the WHO by pointing them as the responsible for the spread of the COVID-19 all over the world. Since Trump believes that he wisely has postponed the flights from China to the U.S. However, the WHO authorities have criticized his decisions publicly while they did not utter a word about China's lockdown at home.

In the earliest days of the virus, **China** locked down travel domestically while allowing flights to leave China and **infect the world**. China condemned my travel ban on their country, even as they cancelled domestic flights and locked citizens in their homes. **The Chinese government and the World Health Organization—which is virtually controlled by China—falsely declared that there was no evidence of human-to-human transmission**. Later, they falsely said people without symptoms would not spread the disease. **The United Nations must hold China accountable for their actions** (O'Brien, 2020, p.106).

Comparing the COVID-19 global pandemic with the Second World War, Donald Trump urges the United Nations that this battle is another “total war against an invisible enemy”, and it needs a united front which comprised of the U.S., and it allies against China. Thus, President Trump warns the UN that it must investigate Chinese actions and its role in the both outbreak and spread of the COVID-19.

In his speech, President Trump does not directly refer China, rather he criticizes China in specific subjects by using adjectives. Trump's usage of binary oppositions of the 'us versus them' dichotomy between the U.S. and China, differentiates two countries while praising the 'American self' and disparaging China. This paves way for the description

of the negative image of China and its role in the world together with idealized identification of the U.S.

In the United States, we launched the most aggressive mobilization since the Second World War.....We will distribute a vaccine, we will defeat the virus, we will end the pandemic, and we will enter a new era of unprecedented prosperity, cooperation, and peace. As we pursue this bright future, **we must hold accountable the nation which unleashed this plague onto the world: China** (O'Brien, 2020, p.106).

For Trump, China symbolizes the source of disease, yet it is the United States who conduct a new initiative called Operation Warp Speed which aims at to find lifesaving solutions, vaccines and other treatments for the COVID-19 and save lives. Hence, Trump basically portrays China as the destructive power whereas depicts the America as the savior of the world.

Apart from COVID-19, President Trump also accuses China by labelling Beijing's industry as reason of pollution. Moreover, Trump defends his decision to withdraw from Paris Climate Accord by blaming China as responsible for the environmental pollution more than the U.S. He also legitimizes his withdrawal decision that although China has polluted the air more than US, the U.S. always has been blaming for the air pollution. That is the main reason why President Trump takes the decision of withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord.

Then, President Trump continues with the identification and idealization of the United States by giving domestic examples on how his administration advances liberties at home, creating more opportunities for women. Trump depicts the U.S. as **"America will always be a leader in human rights"** and **"bedrock of freedom and security"** which evocates discourse of American exceptionalism citing America as a true example for the whole world (O'Brien, 2020, p.107). Trump advocates that under his administration, the U.S. has a better economy at home, strengthens its military power as well as its status in NATO in order to counter Chinese aggression. Moreover, Trump touches on the new partnership with the Latin American countries to confront growing influence of Beijing in the region. His mentions also include Middle East, the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and killing of Joint and killing of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in 2019 who was the leader of ISIS and Qasem Soleimani in 2020. President Trump defends that from the Balkans to the Middle East, the U.S. acts as a responsible power to promote peace and security together with enhancing democratic values all over the world.

By describing and idealizing America with its democratic values and exceptional nature, Trump evokes the Ronald Reagan's "peace through strength" policy, since for Trump, the United States must be powerful in order to deter China and make China accept American terms to achieve peace. For Trump, **"America is fulfilling our destiny as peacemaker, but it is peace through strength. We are stronger now than ever before"** (O'Brien, 2020, p.108). Among the "real problems" which he enlists in his speech, Trump associates these problems mainly with China and labels the responses to these problems as "failed solutions". Then, Trump praises his "America first" policy which differentiates Trump administration from the previous ones.

4.2.3.2. Predication:

Predication refers to the strategy reinvigorate the categorizations of in-group and out-group by labelling former as positive and ideal and latter as negative and backward (Balkan-Şahin, 2020, p.66). Generally, the discursive construction of identities of self and other or in- and out-groups in texts and speeches follow a pattern that portrays self and other attributing positive characteristics to former and negative feature to the latter. It can be clearly seen from the President Trump's UN speech that he lists negative characteristics to depict China and its activities. Trump describes China as the source and main cause for the transmission of COVID-19 which makes it a global pandemic resulting the worldwide economic problems, unemployment and recession, deceitful nature of China who paid a bribe to WHO authorities to hide the outbreak of the COVID-19, also a cheater who defends domestic implementation of lockdowns in China strictly, while opposing same precautions in the U.S.

In the earliest days of the virus, **China** locked down travel domestically while allowing flights to leave China and **infect the world**. China condemned my travel ban on their country, even as they cancelled domestic flights and locked citizens in their homes. **The Chinese government and the World Health Organization—which is virtually controlled by China—falsely declared that there was no evidence of human-to-human transmission**. Later, they falsely said people without symptoms would not spread the disease. **The United Nations must hold China accountable for their actions** (O'Brien, 2020, p.106).

That is why Trump labels COVID-19 as the "Chinese virus" that constitutes a great challenge and an enemy of the humanity. Apart from COVID-19, Trump refers to the other challenges stemming from China. He denominates China as trade abuser since China is not fair in its economic and commercial relations with the U.S., and China as

the main responsible of the climate crisis due to its huge gas emission more than the U.S.

In addition, every year, **China dumps millions and millions of tons of plastic and trash into the oceans, overfishes other countries' waters, destroys vast swaths of coral reef, and emits more toxic mercury into the atmosphere** than any country anywhere in the world. China's carbon emissions are nearly twice what the U.S. has, and it's rising fast. (O'Brien, 2020, p.106)

Citing all these 'vital' challenges and dangers which stem from China, Donald Trump calls for a collective action, response and struggle against China especially led by the United Nations. President Trump exemplifies the U.S. efforts to produce vaccines and treatments in the global fight against the COVID-19.

Emphasizing the nature of American adherence to the human rights, freedom and democracy as direct opposite of China, Trump defends that "**America will always be a leader in human rights**....We also know that American prosperity is the **bedrock of freedom and security** all over the world" (O'Brien, 2020, p.107). Trump's portrayal of America as "destined as a peacemaker" also underlines both the America's growing power and its 'indispensable' role in the world as a leader.

4.2.3.3. Argumentation:

Argumentation is a strategy used to justify and legitimize the in-group and out-group categorization, inclusion, or exclusion. It functions as a way of persuasion of the interlocutor of the discourse (Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p.27). Under the argumentation as a strategy, '*topoi*' or '*topos*' which means argumentation schemes, are used in order to convince the audience and justify the policies. *Topoi* links argument to conclusion or central claim of discourse directly like a short cut (as cited in Özoflu, 2022, p.77). Among the most commonly used ones, *topos* of history and *topos* of threat are used as argumentation schemes in Trump's speech at the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Donald Trump in his speech at United Nations General Assembly in 2020, develops two basic argumentation lines in discussing China. The first one is about the rising power of China and global threats stemming from the Chinese activities, the other one is related to the Chinese identity as the other in the American context.

Topos of history is used to giving examples from history and establishes a cause-and-effect analogy with past examples. *Topos* of history aims at teaching certain actions lead to certain consequences based on historical examples (Balkan-Şahin, 2022,

p.66). Accordingly, concerning China's rising power status and dangers regarding the rise of China as a new power and challenger against the U.S., Trump makes use of *topos* of history in order to justify his argument that rising China and related dangers resemble the aggressive nations in the Second World War which resulted in loss of millions of lives. With the same respect, COVID-19, "Chinese virus" in Trump's words which caused millions of deaths, is totally a brand-new and invisible enemy which necessitate collective action and total war just like the Second World War.

Seventy-five years after the **end of World War II** and the founding of the United Nations, we are once again engaged in a **great global struggle**. We have waged a **fierce battle against the invisible enemy—the China virus**—which has claimed countless lives in 188 countries (O'Brien, 2020, p.105).

Regarding the second argumentation line, Trump employs *topos* of threat. *Topos* of threat is a method that emphasizes possible dangerous consequences of certain political decisions. Moreover, it intends to justify and legitimize the decisions taken by the authorities and defends the formation of alliance against an enemy (Balkan-Şahin, 2020, p.66).

The Chinese government and the World Health Organization—which is virtually controlled by China—falsely declared that there was no evidence of human-to-human transmission. Later, they falsely said people without symptoms would not spread the disease. **The United Nations must hold China accountable for their actions. In addition, every year, China dumps millions and millions of tons of plastic and trash into the oceans, overfishes other countries' waters, destroys vast swaths of coral reef, and emits more toxic mercury into the atmosphere than any country anywhere in the world. China's carbon emissions are nearly twice what the U.S. has, and it's rising fast (O'Brien, 2020, p.106).**

By using *topos* of threat, China is described as a total challenger and a direct threat for the world in terms of health, environment, economy and trade, human rights, and international order. Since Trump frequently cites the Chinese efforts to deceive international organizations namely WHO, unfair Chinese manner in commercial relations, domestic human right violations in Tibet and Xinjiang. Following all these attributions and accusations, Trump announces that China projects its own model of state capitalism and autocratic regime which stand as a direct challenge for the world peace and security.

We stood up to decades of **China's abuses**. We revitalized the NATO Alliance, where other countries are now paying a much more fair share. We forged historic partnerships with Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador to stop human smuggling. We are standing with the people of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela in their righteous struggle for freedom (O'Brien, 2020, p.108).

Trump makes use of binary oppositions to characterize the U.S. and China. He announces that China do not pose a direct threat against only the U.S., yet it poses grave multilateral dangers for the world.

As we speak, the United States is also working to end the war in Afghanistan, and we are bringing our troops home. **America is fulfilling our destiny as peacemaker**, but it is **peace through strength. We are stronger now than ever before. Our weapons are at an advanced level like we've never had before**—like, frankly, we've never even thought of having before. And I only pray to God that we never have to use them. For decades, the same tired voices proposed the same failed solutions, pursuing global ambitions at the expense of their own people. But only when you take care of your own citizens will you find a true basis for cooperation **As President, I have rejected the failed approaches of the past, and I am proudly putting America first..** (O'Brien, 2020, pp.108-109).

Yet, the U.S. does its part adopting the “America first” policy which enables the U.S. shine as an example domestically and increases American military and economic power in order to contain China and protect the world from the Chinese aggression. The main point of Trump’s “America First” policy aims at strengthening America’s capabilities at home and abroad for both ensuring the world peace and persuading China through the growing American military and economic power.

As the former president, Donald Trump has directly targeted China before and after the COVID-19 pandemic and lost the U.S. Presidential Election in 2020. As of May 2024, Donald Trump stands as an assertive candidate for the U.S. Presidential elections in 2024, who has got back to the stage by again concentrating on mainly China and Biden as his rivals in the upcoming election. In many of his rallies, China and illegal Chinese immigrants in the U.S. are on Trump’s agenda. In his last rally on 13 April 2024, in Schnecksville, Pennsylvania, Donald Trump described Chinese immigrants as a group of “military-aged man” who come to the U.S. in order to build an army, attack the U.S. and American values:

But think of it, **they're coming in from China, 31, 32,000** over the last few months, and they are all **military age**, and they **mostly are men**. And it sounds like to me, are **they trying to build a little army in our country?** Is that what they're trying to do? And Biden doesn't know because the guy doesn't have a clue (AP Archive, 2024).

When Trump’s speech about China and Chinese immigrants at his Pennsylvania rally is analyzed overall, he put emphasis on the ages and genders of Chinese immigrants by using the term “military-aged” men at least six times and he has described illegal Chinese immigrants with the image of “immigrant army” as a threat for the U.S. at least

twice. Trump's accusations targeted to Chinese immigrants have become popular both among the Republicans and in social media.

The image of an immigrant "army building" discourse targeting Chinese immigrants is generally used by many republicans, including Steven Cheung, communications director of Trump's campaign:

These individuals have not been vetted or screened, and we have no idea who they are affiliated with or what their intention is. This sets a dangerous precedent for bad actors and potentially nefarious individuals to exploit **Joe Biden's porous border** to send **countless military-aged men into the United States** completely unfettered (Ting et al., 2024).

Following Trump and Cheung, Republican Representative of California, Mike Garcia states that "They are **fighting-age males, primarily single**, and you know, this isn't a coincidence, the immigrants could later be used as '**saboteurs**' if **Chinese President Xi Jinping 'directs'** that" (Ting et al., 2024).

Through anti-Chinese discourse, Donald Trump and Republican Party members are accused of exploiting risks stemming from the rising geopolitical danger of China and increasing number of illegal Chinese immigrants in the U.S. for the sake of their political interests by the Democrats, journalists, and several scholars. While there is no doubt that China poses a threat to the U.S., there is no evidence to substantiate Trump's claim of the fact that Chinese immigrants build an army in the U.S. Kurt Campbell, Deputy Secretary of State point out that the Chinese immigrants and nationals are accepted by the Biden administration as "economic migrants" (Ting et al., 2024).

Despite the fact that China has posed a great geopolitical threat to the U.S. in terms of espionage, growing Chinese military, economic and political activities, and influence globally, and criminal records of illegal Chinese immigrants in the U.S. including an arrest of Chinese immigrant breaching a California military base, there is hardly any evidence that Chinese immigrants reach to the U.S. in order to build an army and fight against Americans. As it is reported by the Associated Press (Ting et al., 2024), main target of illegal Chinese immigrants in their dangerous journey through Mexico to the U.S. is to find a better occupation and living standards in the U.S. The same situation is valid for the legal Chinese immigrants. Whether they have capital or not, Chinese immigrants in the U.S. pursue a better life conditions and freedom of speech of which they lack in China. After their arrival in the U.S., Chinese immigrants generally prefer

to join Chinese communities who already settled in the U.S. because they are more likely to be socially accepted within a group of Chinese communities and find a work there.

The impact of Donald Trump's pithy discourse concentrating mainly on China and Chinese immigrants in the U.S. has grown concerns about the rise of anti-Chinese sentiment and hatred against Asians which has been already at climax due to the COVID-19 in the U.S.

It is quite clear that there is a main political reason, to win the 2024 U.S. Presidential elections, beneath the surface of Trump's aggressive rhetoric against China and Chinese immigrants in the U.S. However, Trump's anti-Chinese discourse can be accepted as the reminiscent and reminder of the past experiences of Chinese immigrants in the U.S. in the nineteenth century which have touched upon in the historical backgrounds section of the third chapter of this thesis.

Yet, as Sapna Cheryan points out that these allegations further inflame the anti-Chinese sentiment in the U.S. and all these stereotypical representations and rhetoric have a long historical background in the U.S. These stereotypical representations and rhetoric are rooted in a general assumption that Asians, especially Chinese immigrants, cannot adapt to the US, will never belong to and assimilate into American society, and will always be a threat at the heart of society. It is quite noteworthy that even today all those stereotypical expressions targeting Chinese immigrants and Asians overall, based on the identity of Chinese other, can still occupy place in political discourse of the U.S. (Ting et al., 2024).

4.3. EVALUATION

For finding out proper answers to the main research question of this thesis which aims to examine the way the U.S has constructed identity of China as threat after 2010s as a result of rise of China and Chinese replacement of the U.S. in all economic scales with reference to social constructivism and discourse-historical approach as methodology, this thesis identifies that the U.S. has established American self-identity in an idealized way by combining religious and political foundations of the concept of American exceptionalism. Through American exceptionalism, the U.S. has constructed its self-identity as "the indispensable leader" of the world whose values are universal and at the same time exceptional.

Likewise, historical background of the construction of the identity of China in the U.S. has illustrated that in the same way, the U.S. has constructed the identity of China and Chinese in the United States in line with its own interests. That is to say, depending on the current situation and need of the United States, in accordance with the very American interests, the identity of China and characteristics attributed to China and Chinese have changed over time. However, with the rise of China as an economic and political challenger against the U.S., the current American discourse preferred to revive old-established negative connotations for the identity of China which dated back to nineteenth century. As these old stereotypical (re)construction of identity of China has rooted in the U.S. domestic realm and it has gained universal characteristics in the twenty first century due to China's growing importance for the U.S.

Considering the historical background and developments of the American and Chinese identities in the U.S., in the analyses of DHA of Clinton's "America's Pacific Century" in 2011 and Trump's speech at the 75th Session of United Nations General Assembly in 2020, this thesis aims to reveal the parallels between rise of China's impact on world economy and politics and rise of the U.S. "war on words" against China.

In order to reply to the main research question in the analyses of Clinton's "America's Pacific Century" and Trump's speech at the 75th Session of United Nations General Assembly, this thesis intends to illustrate the alteration of China identity in 2011 and in 2020.

When China did not pose a direct danger for the U.S., it did mention China as regional power and rival in Clinton's "America's Pacific Century". The discursive strategies adopted by the Clinton simply reveal that the U.S. did not take China directly as its enemy. Instead, in line with Obama's multilateralism, Clinton's "America's Pacific Century", in a way invited China to join cooperative initiations led by the U.S. and to adopt the universal American values.

The didactic tone of Clinton to urge China comply and adopt democracy, respect international law and human rights, reveals that in 2011, the U.S. still perceived itself as leader who has power to say others what should they do. Although the whole article emphasizes the growing importance of Asia Pacific region and mentions several countries, the constant reference and call to China reveals that the main point of the

U.S. Asia Pivot is to balance and counter China, and make China rise under the U.S. umbrella just like India.

Clinton has also utilized 'us versus them' dichotomy by using discursive strategies in order to (re)construct the U.S. identity as "indispensable leader" who represents and protects the universal democratic values. Clinton also set forth that just like in the aftermath of Second World War, now Asia Pacific looks for the continuation of American leadership. By indicating China as "other", Clinton prefers to portray China not as "an ally of the U.S.", but a regional actor challenging the U.S. The constant call from Clinton to China for reforming its political system and becoming transparent in China's intentions in terms of economy and military, signifies that the U.S. did not see China as its equivalent. Moreover, listing India and Indonesia among the democracies in the Asia-Pacific, Clinton labels China directly as authoritarian and antidemocratic unlike the U.S. itself. Afterwards, depicting the U.S. as pure democratic power and leader, Clinton clarifies the distinction between the U.S and China.

Likewise, in order to find out the way in which China has (re)constructed as a direct threat in 2020, Donald Trump's speech delivered in the 75th session of United Nations General Assembly and the dramatic shift in the identity of China within nine years has been analyzed. On all economic indicators, China had already surpassed the U.S. by 2020.

And even, as Trump stated in his speech that China has started to intervene and direct an international organization and agency of the United Nations, namely World Health Organization (WHO). This indicates that even in the U.S. led organizations and current world order, China can challenge the U.S. directly. That is why, China has (re)constructed as a direct threat by Trump not only for the U.S. but also for the whole world.

Moreover, in order to revitalize the spirit of American leadership, President Trump claims that the U.S. still has the best economy, best military and best political system based on democracy and religious freedom in the world.

The dichotomy of us versus them can be observed within the discursive strategies used in Trump's speech at the United Nations General Assembly in order to consolidate his claims directed China. Within the us versus them dichotomy, Trump has emphasized positive characteristics of the United States as 'bedrock of freedom'

together with constant need for the American leadership in the world, especially vis a vis global Chinese threat. Trump has reinforced the traditional American notion that the United States is the only power to stabilize and supervise the world order just it did it before. With regards to China, Trump enlists the global threats arising from the growing Chinese power in terms of economy, military, health, democracy, human rights, and ecology in order to visualize that China has posed grave danger not only for the United States but also for the whole world.

When the discourses embedded in Clinton's "America's Pacific Century" and Trump's speech at the 75th Session of United Nations General Assembly are analyzed, the change in the identity of China from partner to threat can be seen clearly as a reflection of China's growing power, primarily in terms of economy and military as a challenger against the U.S. In other words, the development of different definitions of different terms and different American administrations for identifying China, simply stem from the radical shift in Chinese global capabilities and power projections from 2011 to 2020.

Historically, in accordance with the American interests, the U.S. has emphasized the negative aspects of its rivals by constructing their identities as threat and other. Likewise, in 2010s, with its strong economy, manufacturing sector, enormous population, military, and political revisionist steps of China paved way for the reconstruction of the identity of China by the U.S. as threat in parallel with China's accelerating level of danger for the U.S. Thus, the main difference between the portrayal of China in 2011 and in 2020 is closely related with the rise of China's economy and potential risk of China's ability to replace the U.S. as a new hegemon.

When the findings obtained with Discourse-Historical Analysis, are evaluated in general, this thesis brings forward that the United States who has constructed its self-identity with idealized characteristics under the concept of American exceptionalism, defines and (re)constructs the identity of China as threat, since the United States perceives it as economic and political rival. At the same time, the United States has constructed China as a threat, it has also (re)constructed its self-identity in an idealized way.

Table 4.1: Discursive Strategies used in Hillary Clinton's "America's Pacific Century"

Nomination	How are the actors named and referred to linguistically?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China as emerging, strategic power and a key (f)actor • China's rise is referred as the most challenging issue for the United States • United States' role as an irreplaceable leader • The U.S. is represented as the champion of democracy and Human Rights
Predication	What characteristics are attributed to the actors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China as Asia Giant and American partner in the region, not an ally • America's commitment to multilateralism and cooperation • China's deficiencies of democracy, Human rights, and minority issues • China as non-transparent actor
Argumentation <i>Topos of history</i>	Which arguments and argumentation schemes (<i>topos</i>) are used by the author to justify and legitimize the action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topos</i> of history: • Compare the atmosphere of post-Second World War and current atmosphere in the Asia Pacific region for the American leadership • Glorification of American history • Difference and similarities between past and present • Shared historical experiences • Defining the structural differences between the U.S.S.R. and China who has been more integrated to the world

Table 4.2: Discursive Strategies used in President Donald Trump's Speech at United Nations General Assembly

<p>Nomination</p>	<p>How are the actors named and referred to linguistically?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese responsibility for the outbreak of “invisible enemy” COVID-19, pollution • Chinese fallacy in WHO • US is mentioned as responsible leader dedicating to develop vaccines for the sake of humanity
<p>Predication</p>	<p>What characteristics are attributed to the actors?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative attributions to China as contagious, currency manipulator, deceitful, trade abuser • Positive attributions to the U.S. as the world leader, founder of the world order, and saviour of the world from the ‘invisible enemy’
<p>Argumentation <i>Topos of history</i> <i>Topos of threat</i></p>	<p>Which arguments and argumentation schemes (<i>topos</i>) are used by the author to justify and legitimize the action?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Topos of history:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glorification of American history • Emphasis on differences and sameness between the past and present by drawing parallels between the Axis powers of Second World War and the COVID-19 as ‘invisible enemy’ • Shared historical sorrows such as the loss of lives due to the pandemic - <i>Topos of threat:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for a unification against the ‘invisible enemy’ and the force behind it: China • Emphasis on the joint reaction against this common threat • The (re)presentation of total threats of health, economy, global warming and pollution, trade, democracy and war stemming from Chinese activities

CONCLUSION

Just like the individuals, societies and nations have developed a distinct notion of their selves and identities with their value of judgement which have vital importance and impact over the national and official concepts including their foreign policies. Since by putting the self on the center, one can grasp the essence of the self-identity and the outsiders. Therefore, by taking national identity as the nucleus of the self, it plays an essential role as a tool of determining oneself and 'others'.

In exactly the same way of the many nations in the world portraying themselves in a positive way, the United States also adopted the same way to determine its national characteristics within the framework of American Exceptionalism which has provided a basis for the imagined community, the Americanness. In this regard, American exceptionalism has profoundly impacted the U.S. foreign policy. Since American public, high profile officials and especially US presidents consider that their exceptional nature, identity, and role in the world necessitate the involvement of the U.S. in almost every part of the world for the sake of spreading American values of democracy, human rights and freedom. Herein, this thesis deals with the concept of American exceptionalism as a cornerstone of American identity in order to examine the reciprocal relations of identity and foreign policy.

In the introduction of the thesis, research question and aim of the study were mentioned. With the acknowledgement of the American construction of China as a threat, the main goal of the study was to examine the causes and historical development behind the American perception and construction of China as a rival and direct threat to itself. Afterwards, the literature review of the study was conducted within three categories: American identity and American exceptionalism, Constructivist analysis of American foreign policy, and construction of Chinese as the American other.

In the first chapter of the thesis, theory and methodology used in thesis were explained. Social Constructivism has been used to understand the impact of domestic and international sources of identity together with the identity as a defining force behind the paces and foreign policy orientations of states. Social Identity Theory is also introduced to socio-psychological foundations of the cognitive process of construction of social identity, in-groups and out-groups, social categorization. Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) was used in this thesis since it offers critical lenses analyzing

speeches and discourses in order to reveal the power relations and identity constructions within a historical framework, namely, to understand the historical development of Chinese other in the U.S.

In the second chapter of the thesis, in connection with the Discourse-Historical Analysis, the American identity within the framework of American exceptionalism, its development and its religious, political, and geopolitical origins together with its impact on the American foreign policy has been examined. The constitutive impact of the American exceptionalism as a concept that influenced American identity even before the founding of the United States was examined since it has direct influence and projections over the American foreign policy. Regarding itself as a chosen nation with a special providence, within the context of American exceptionalism the U.S. has constructed not only its self-identity but also the identity of 'other'. On the other hand, exceptionalist self-identity of the U.S. has paved the way for the American adoption of internationalist foreign policy.

In the third chapter of the thesis, the aim was to narrate the historical development of the Chinese identity construction in the American context. In this regard, unlike the previous 'other' identities of U.S.' rivals, the construction of Chinese other identity has rooted in internal dynamics of the U.S. at first, then it has gained international characteristics. Within the American context, the identity of Chinese which has been constructed in line with the American self-identity and American interests, has existed for a long time and it has been in a constant state of flux. As an ever-existing phenomenon, the identity of Chinese threat has reinterpreted as a direct threat to the U.S. and its superpower status especially after China has started to rise first economically then politically and militarily.

In the fourth chapter of the thesis, the main goal was to examine the construction of Chinese identity as 'other' in the speeches and discourses of American presidents and high-profile policy makers. In order to analyzing and identifying the construction of others, this chapter has conducted Discourse-Historical Analysis (DHA) to the Hillary Clinton's Foreign Policy article "America's Pacific Century" and President Donald Trump's speech at the United Nations General Assembly. The main aim was to point out the development and change in the construction of Chinese identity starting from Obama administration to Trump's period.

As Clinton refers that China is the “most challenging issue” of the twenty-first century for the U.S., since China has risen as an economic giant and new global power that has challenged the U.S. Hence, the fourth chapter has examined the policy of 'Pivot to Asia' of the Obama Administration. As the U.S. has acknowledged that China is going to be a revisionist power in a short period of time. On that regard, the U.S. has employed a new foreign policy prioritizes Asia-Pacific region. Although China has never been mentioned as the main target of the policy, it was China's rise which acts as the driving force behind the American pivot to Asia in 2011.

President Donald Trump's Speech on the 75th session of the United States General Assembly on September 22, 2020, has initiate a period of new version of a Cold War together with the war of words in U.S. China relations. Heavily influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and its lasting and devastating consequences, in his United Nations speech Trump has referred China in a quite negative way. Accusing China as the source and main reason of the coronavirus disease and its worldwide spread, Trump has likened China as the Axis powers of the Second World War. Moreover, he accused China of bribery and World Health Organization at the same time. For him, China intended to hide the outbreak of the virus by money and force. Trump also pointed out that China does not responsible only for the coronavirus pandemic which hit the U.S. bad, but China is the main reason and main responsible for the climate change due to its carbo gas emissions and economic recession in the world.

In that regard, the U.S. who has started to comprehend that China has started to challenge against it, defined the Asia-Pacific region as its top priority. At first, the U.S. has pursued a softer tone towards China by offering multilateral cooperation regarding the economic, political, and military developments in the Asia-Pacific. From 2011 on, American attention has started to shift to the Asia. However, after just nine years, the bilateral relations have started to become tough day by day. Both countries have started to adopt hawkish policies towards each other. With the COVID-19 pandemic's devastating global impact and unpredictable nature of Trump's presidency, the U.S. has started to employ new policies which directly lash out China. Herewith, it can be inferred that China has started to construct as a regional power and responsible American partner by the Obama Administration. Then, in Trump's term China has been constructed as an archenemy of the U.S. blaming China as the responsible of

American unemployment, economic recession and emergence and spread of a deadly virus which caused deaths of millions of Americans.

Therefore, this study aims at examining the U.S. construction of China as a direct threat for itself arising from the increasing China's economic and political power with historical development and change of China identity which have been echoed in the discursive representations the two selected discourses from 2011 and 2020.

The U.S. has put its self-identity at the center, and it has identified actors whom the U.S. has considered as a threat to its existence. On that regard, the argument that the historical development of American identity has caused internationalist politics, has examined. Accordingly, American construction of Chinese identity as the 'other' starting from nineteenth century, has gained universal characteristics due to the rise of China which has been perceived as the challenge and vital danger for the United States. By constructing China as 'threat' or 'other', the U.S. has conducted its foreign policy in accordance with these constructions which are generally used to legitimize and justify the U.S. actions and foreign policy choices.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's 2011 Foreign Policy article "America's Pacific Century" and President Donald Trump's speech at the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2020 are analyzed with the Discourse-Historical Approach regarding the fact that the construction of identity of China in the U.S. has evolved in parallel with the global rise of China in economic and political terms. Based upon the given context and the framework that has been drawn beforehand, this thesis argues that the identity of China has constructed by the U.S. deliberately as a threat in line with the rise of China's power and its challenge against the U.S. hegemony in order to justify and legitimize its foreign policy choices.

The research which has been carried out for this thesis dwell on the U.S foreign policy towards China within the framework of social constructivism in terms of the change in the identity construction of China in the U.S. Due to the constraints of time and thesis format, this thesis handled the topics in accordance with the structural constraints. Therefore, for further research additional analysis of China identity's historical development and representations in the U.S. is recommended. Moreover, due to the absence of a systematic policy of the Biden Administration towards China, textual and discourse analysis of multiple important speeches of President Biden and Anthony

Blinken as the Secretary of State dealing with China are also recommended for further analysis of the U.S. foreign policy towards China after the 2020.

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Doküman Kodu Form No.	FRM-YL-15
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Tarih: 06.06.2024

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